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Tenth and final progress report on the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards by the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The tenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) is the final report summarizing the progress made and challenges experienced during the institutionalization of IPSAS compliance at the United Nations and throughout the United Nations system. The report discusses progress at the United Nations with respect to each of the five pillars of IPSAS sustainability and describes the outlook for continuing sustainability.

All 24 organizations of the United Nations system have successfully completed their implementation of IPSAS and continue to receive unqualified audit opinions. Those results attest to the capability of the United Nations system to have achieved sustained compliance with IPSAS to date, with IPSAS continuously evolving in order to improve the quality of financial reporting, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability.

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I. Introduction

1. In 2006, by its resolution 60/283, the General Assembly approved the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) for presentation of the financial statements of the United Nations. Since 2008, the Secretary-General has submitted annual reports (A/62/806, A/64/355, A/65/308, A/66/379, A/67/344, A/68/351, A/69/367, A/70/329 and A/71/226) on the adoption of IPSAS to the General Assembly.

2. The present report, being the final one, summarizes the progress made and challenges experienced during the institutionalization of IPSAS and the related sustainability activities carried out at the United Nations and throughout the United Nations system during the period from 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017.

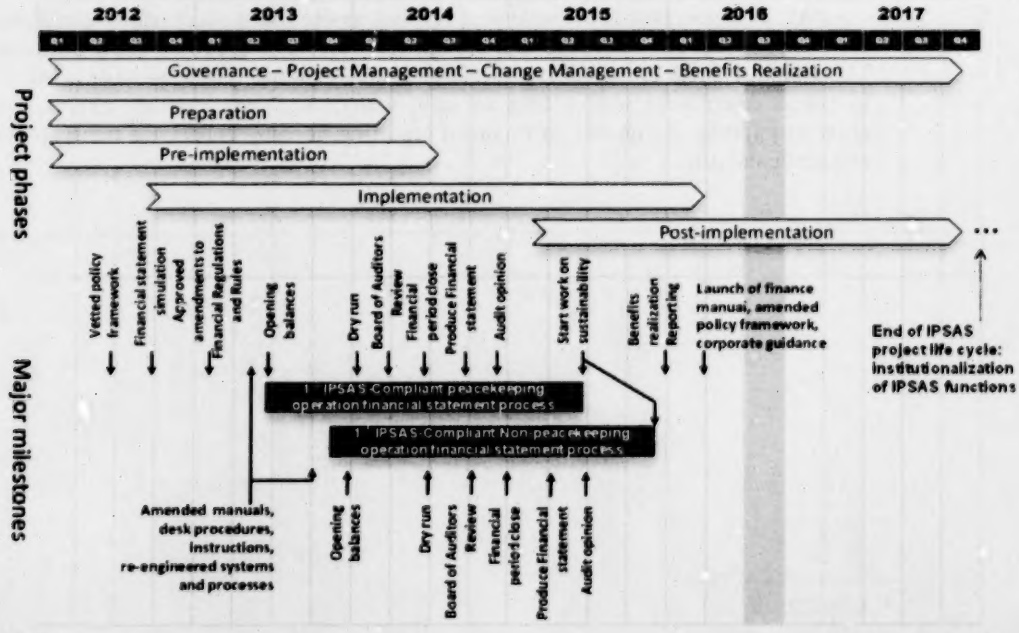
3. The report provides an update on the ongoing activities identified as central to the long-term sustainability of IPSAS compliance. Progress made at the United Nations in that regard is described in section II, followed by system-wide progress in section III, outlook in section IV and action to be taken by the General Assembly in section V.

II. Sustaining compliance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards at the United Nations

A. Overview

4. As shown in the figure below, the United Nations IPSAS project is now in its final stage: the post-implementation and sustainability phase. As outlined in the IPSAS sustainability plan approved by the IPSAS Steering Committee and endorsed by the Management Committee in 2015, the project will come to an end on 31 December 2017.

Project phases and major milestones



B. Governance and project oversight

5. The IPSAS Steering Committee has met on a half-yearly basis and will continue to do so until the end of the project to review progress and manage risks.

6. In August 2015, the Committee updated its terms of reference to focus on delivering sustainability, moving from legacy systems to Umoja as the book of record for financial statements, securing the long-term sustainability of IPSAS compliance, analysing financial information and training needs, addressing how to raise the level of financial management knowledge across the United Nations and working with the IPSAS Board, the Board of Auditors and internal stakeholders.

7. The Committee has maintained strong oversight of the successful implementation of the IPSAS sustainability plan and, with the project in its final stage, will be winding up at the end of 2017. The Committee's project assurance role has been vital in supporting the financial statement preparation process and in monitoring the progress of work related to the deliverables under all work streams.

8. The Independent Audit Advisory Committee will continue to advise the General Assembly in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities with respect to IPSAS-related matters until the end of the project's life cycle.

C. Risk management

Previously identified risk

9. As reported in the ninth progress report of the Secretary-General (see A/71/226, paras. 11-15), three risks remained for the IPSAS project. The first risk identified was the insufficient knowledge and documented processes in the area of property management, which had an impact on asset accounting. This risk was addressed through the holding of training workshops in multiple locations, which saw the participation of more than 150 staff members from 35 duty stations.

10. The second risk, the transition from multiple legacy systems to Umoja, was addressed with the exception of one element: the migration of data from Galileo to Umoja, which is on track to be completed by 1 September 2017. The IPSAS project team is actively involved in the Galileo decommissioning project and is tracking this risk.

11. The third risk relates to the lack of, suboptimal or inaccurate use of IPSAS information for management decision-making. While it will take more time for the Organization to learn to fully utilize the rich information provided by IPSAS, the Organization has begun to use that information in decision-making. For example, IPSAS has highlighted the magnitude of existing after-service health insurance liabilities, and the Organization began to fund such liabilities related to extrabudgetary activities with effect from 1 January 2017.

Newly identified risk

12. The institutionalization of IPSAS based on five sustainability pillars, as described in the ninth progress report, depends upon the availability of sufficient resources to carry out sustainability activities.

13. Experience gained during the three financial periods that have elapsed since the preparation of the first IPSAS-compliant financial statements in 2014, and a review of the residual functions of the IPSAS team, have confirmed that the adoption of IPSAS has permanently increased the workload of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts comprising tasks that have not

previously been performed. Furthermore, the complexity of those tasks requires a greater degree of technical expertise than usual. This in turn results in the need to strengthen existing resources and to increase capacity to meet the increased demands.

14. The complexity of the financial information presented for audit on the face of and in the notes to the financial statements has significantly increased compared with the United Nations system accounting standards, requiring more elaborate work processes and increased monitoring to ensure that controls are strengthened and remain functional in order to satisfy IPSAS requirements as well as requirements of the auditors.

15. With the introduction of IPSAS and Umoja, finance staff had to make the transition from being local process experts to being global process experts in order to support offices and missions that needed general accounting guidance or system guidance on specific transactions. It is also important to note that the IPSAS team is supporting 13 reporting entities,[1] not just Volumes I and II of the financial statements for the United Nations.

16. As stated in the ninth progress report, a number of critical activities must be mainstreamed within the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts to support the sustainability of IPSAS at the United Nations. For that reason, it is recalled that the continuation of IPSAS posts was proposed in order to maintain a core structure that will handle the portion of those critical activities previously performed by the IPSAS team that cannot be absorbed within existing resources.

17. A newly identified risk is the reduction of capacity and the loss of specialized technical skills resulting from the abolishment of IPSAS-related positions. Adequate capacity is required to carry out the following IPSAS sustainability activities:

(a) Coordinating potentially inconsistent interpretation and implementation of new IPSAS standards among the 13 reporting entities, resulting in consistent application within the Secretariat and thus ensuring the consistency and comparability of financial information, one of the key benefits of IPSAS. The lack of central support could potentially result in each entity building capacity locally with varying levels of expertise to address complex IPSAS policy decisions relating to its organization. The inconsistency among entities will be difficult to defend and will increase the risk of audit qualifications;

(b) Coping adequately with the changes needed to translate new or updated IPSAS standards into the United Nations Policy Framework for International Public Sector Accounting Standards and United Nations corporate guidance and training materials, as well as to address changes in Umoja. The lack of capacity will jeopardize the IPSAS compliance of the 13 reporting entities, which could potentially lead to adverse audit findings and audit qualifications;

(c) Implementing the statement of internal control recommended by the Board of Auditors, using a practical approach tailored to United Nations operations. The lack of adequate capacity to sustain IPSAS will have a negative impact on the statement of internal control;

[1] The United Nations produces 13 financial statements, as follows: Volume I (United Nations), Volume II (United Nations peacekeeping operations), International Trade Centre, United Nations University, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, United Nations Compensation Commission, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Tribunals (International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia) and United Nations escrow account.

(d) Supporting missions following the implementation of Umoja asset accounting, which is scheduled for 1 September 2017. It is important to note that the current capacity is insufficient to address the audit observations of the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on property management and accounting and simultaneously provide significant post-implementation support to missions.

D. Sustainability of IPSAS

18. As detailed in the eighth (A/70/329) and ninth progress reports, five major components have been identified as core pillars of the efforts to ensure the sustainability of IPSAS. The pillars comprise the management of IPSAS benefits; the strengthening of internal controls, leading to the issuance of a statement of internal control; the management of the IPSAS regulatory framework; the strengthening of Umoja as the backbone of IPSAS-compliant accounting and reporting; and training and skills development. Highlights of the progress made to date on each of the pillars are presented below.

1. Management of IPSAS benefits

19. The United Nations has now entered its third consecutive year of applying IPSAS as its accounting standards and, since the inception of the process, has received an unqualified audit opinion every year. That is a major achievement and a clear demonstration that the Organization is aligned with best practices, which in turn will increase the confidence of Member States and donors as to its accountability and its sound financial management practices. The IPSAS-compliant reports on the financial position and performance of the Organization are becoming a robust basis for the decision-making of governing bodies.

20. The ninth progress report outlined the positive impact of IPSAS, including in terms of the stewardship of assets and liabilities, the availability of comprehensive cost information, the consistent application of the standards and related processes of the field operations environment and the accountability of staff responsible for processes related to financial statements. The dedicated benefits reporting process in place during the previous reporting period was deemed to have achieved its purpose of confirming the existence of those benefits, and therefore the IPSAS Steering Committee decided to integrate benefits reporting with the financial statements reporting process going forward.

21. In line with the request of the General Assembly for further information about specific benefits attributable to IPSAS, the main areas identified in this regard are set out below.

Better management of property, plant and equipment

22. IPSAS requires the recognition of property, plant and equipment on the balance sheet. Under IPSAS, the Secretariat now recognizes property, plant and equipment in its financial statements, resulting in a better understanding of: owned assets and their remaining useful lives, which enables the United Nations to better plan for upcoming capital requirements; property, plant and equipment obtained through financing lease agreements; restrictions on the use of property, plant and equipment; and the estimated costs of maintaining infrastructure through an annual depreciation charge.

23. The value of in-kind contributions from Member States allowing for the use of premises free of charge is available and can be incorporated into the planning process.

Better inventory management

24. Under the United Nations system accounting standards, the United Nations did not recognize inventory (such as rations, water, fuel, spare parts and other consumables and supplies held by peacekeeping and special political missions; and publications) in the statement of financial position. Under IPSAS, the United Nations better understands the extent and the ageing of inventory held, leading to better stewardship and logistics management (for example, better assessment of, and a better action plan for, slow-moving and obsolete stocks).

25. Furthermore, as a result of the recognition of inventory under IPSAS, the United Nations conducts an annual physical verification of all stock on hand, thereby ensuring that proper controls are in place to verify the existence of inventory and the validity of the values reported in financial statements. The enhanced information generated by the improved asset management process is available for decision-making.

Enhanced awareness of existing intangible assets

26. Historically, the United Nations has not recognized assets that are intangible in nature. However, IPSAS requires that such assets be recognized in accordance with certain criteria. Upon the implementation of IPSAS, the United Nations identified several intangible items that met the criteria for recognition, including patents, copyrights, licences and various internally developed and externally acquired software products. The United Nations is now better able to track and control such assets, which have no physical form, and that in turn has helped the Organization to be better able to plan for its future requirements for them.

27. Governing bodies can now see that the net book value of intangible assets was $105 million, of which $84 million related to the Umoja system, in note 16 to the 2016 financial statements for Volume I.

Timely recognition of revenue and better management of receivables

28. As a result of the implementation of IPSAS, it became apparent that the outstanding balance of accounts receivable was significant and that a change in strategy was needed to improve the collection of these long-outstanding amounts. That information has assisted management in changing and improving its relationship with implementing partners and other parties. Another benefit includes the active monitoring of due dates for instalments of voluntary contributions and payment schedules specified in funding agreements.

29. IPSAS requires the upfront recognition of voluntary contributions under unconditional multi-year agreements, which led the United Nations to conduct a complete review of its funding agreements to identify contributions relating to future years that needed to be recognized at the inception of the agreements. Following the implementation of IPSAS, the statement of financial position fully reflects receivables under multi-year agreements, which facilitates the preparation of cash requirement forecasts and provides a comprehensive basis for better planning and enhanced decision-making with respect to project activities by programme managers and other stakeholders. For example, the amount of $466 million in voluntary contributions receivable related to multi-year arrangements was reported on the statement of financial position for Volume I as at 31 December 2016. This compares with $199 million as at 31 December 2015. The increase is due to several major multi-year contribution agreements concluded in 2016 being fully reflected and recognized upfront.

Better measurement of accounts receivable

30. The United Nations system accounting standards did not require the evaluation of ageing accounts receivable in respect of doubtful collection. Under IPSAS, the Organization must identify accounts receivable with respect to which collection is doubtful, estimate the amounts that may not be collected and record an allowance against accounts receivable to reduce the amount reported on the statement of financial position. The new practice of reviewing ageing receivables more rigorously has resulted in greater communication with donors to initiate collection action in order to improve the cash inflow to the Organization.

Disclosure of financial instruments

31. Under IPSAS, the recognition of investment assets and liabilities has changed from a settlement date basis (cash basis) to a trade date basis (accrual basis). This provides more accurate and timely information about the Organization's financial situation and operational risks.

32. Furthermore, IPSAS requires more robust disclosure regarding currency exposure, currency sensitivity and the use of derivative instruments to manage currency risk. This helps the readers of financial statements to understand the exposures and risks of various currencies and the Organization's approach to managing currency risk. A currency exposure sensitivity analysis for the euro and the Swiss franc is included in note 30 to the 2016 financial statements for Volume I, showing the effect that a strengthening or weakening of 10 per cent in those currencies would have had on net assets/surplus or deficit.

33. Since 2016, net cash pool revenue has represented exclusively revenue generated from investment activities. Formerly, bank fees and foreign exchange gains and losses from cash pools were included in investment revenue. Disaggregating those elements, as required under IPSAS, from investment revenue has helped to provide a more accurate picture of investment revenue and operating expenses and facilitated performance comparisons between periods.

Improved reporting of liabilities

34. Under the United Nations system accounting standards, the United Nations had already introduced some employee benefits obligations in the financial statements. Since the implementation of IPSAS, full-scale liabilities have been reported on the basis of the accrual concept, which has provided the Organization and its stakeholders with complete visibility and a better understanding of all its obligations. This means that future liabilities for services currently rendered are included in the financial statements. The after-service health insurance, annual leave and repatriation liabilities constituted 97 per cent of employee benefits obligations, with workers' compensation and accrued salaries and allowances constituting only the remaining 3 per cent. IPSAS has increased transparency and resulted in greater awareness of the magnitude of existing liabilities and provides better information for decision-making. A recent benefit was the decision of the Organization to begin funding the after-service health insurance liabilities related to extrabudgetary activities with effect from 1 January 2017.

Integration of a comparison of budget and actual amounts into the financial statements

35. A comparison of budget and actual expenses is included in the financial statements to fully comply with IPSAS 24: Presentation of budget information in financial statements. Such a comparison provides elements for assessing the

performance of the Organization at a high level and highlights any significant performance issues.

Conclusion of benefits realization

36. Since the first year for which it issued IPSAS-compliant financial statements, the Organization has concluded that applying an independently developed set of accounting standards based on robust due process and requiring comprehensive disclosures about transactions and operations:

(a) Allows for the comparability of financial information across organizations and for better assessment of the financial position and financial performance of the Organization;

(b) Improves the transparency and visibility of the financial aspects of the operations of the Organization for its management as well as for Member States. Major benefits in the area of asset accounting are expected to be realized following the decommissioning of Galileo.

37. IPSAS has also given rise to greater discipline in the generation, management and disclosure of information that is required not only for inclusion in the financial statements and in financial processes, but also for many processes outside the scope of Umoja, such as collection with respect to legal claims and data-cleansing related to voluntary contribution agreements. More and more information has become available to managers and staff at large to support decision-making at all levels.

2. Strengthening of internal controls

38. During the reporting period, the Organization made progress in the strengthening of internal controls, one of the five pillars of the IPSAS sustainability framework in accordance with its approach as described in the ninth progress report (see A/71/226, para. 35). The approach is based on an organization-wide assurance process supporting the issuance of a statement of internal control. That process will require annual assurance statements from all departments, offices and missions affirming that internal controls are present and functioning in their respective areas. In assessing internal controls in their operations, managers will be supported by self-assessment checklists and communication and training materials, as well as by hands-on training.

39. The internal controls pillar serves two important purposes. First, it provides an opportunity for the Organization to conduct a deliberate and conscious assessment of internal controls to inform and support better management practices and reliable reporting. Secondly, such continuous assessment will highlight gaps that will require the Organization to adjust structures, responsibilities, processes and procedures as well as flag possible training needs.

40. While preparatory work was carried out during the first half of 2017 to support the future implementation of a statement of internal control, the work on the sustainability pillar encountered a six-month delay compared with the original plans. The delay was occasioned by multiple change initiatives that could not be undertaken simultaneously, as that would have required the attention of the same parties and stakeholders.

41. The integrated internal control framework of the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission will continue to serve as the conceptual basis of internal control for the United Nations. In that context, it should be recalled that all activities related to internal control within an organization are driven by the objectives that the organization sets for itself in that regard. For the United Nations, the Controller has defined such objectives in financial regulation 5.8 (d). It requires

that the Secretary-General maintain a system of internal controls designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting and assurance that the Organization's resources and assets are safeguarded in accordance with the regulatory framework, in order to meet the aims and objectives of the Organization.

42. The principles and requirements of the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations framework have been adapted to the United Nations organizational context to allow for a structured and harmonized way to assess internal controls organization-wide against the set internal control objectives. This mapping exercise was informed by the most recent and current audit findings of OIOS and the Board of Auditors. The controls will be made as operational as possible and fit for purpose during 2017, so that an assessment of the presence and functioning of internal controls can easily be undertaken by individual departments, offices and missions in the future. The self-assessment will in turn form the basis for and lead to eventual assurance statements by all offices of the Organization.

43. The value of developing a very practical and intuitive way to assess internal controls cannot be overemphasized, as it will facilitate change, increase buy-in and ultimately lead to better controls. Further consultations will involve offices away from Headquarters, regional commissions and extrabudgetary-funded entities of the Secretariat.

44. To that end, the adoption of a nimble and flexible tool is envisaged that will allow for the organization-wide and entity-level assessment of internal controls and related analysis and reporting. Efforts will be made to use and leverage existing applications, systems and functionalities so as to avoid the duplication and fragmentation of systems and applications and keep costs to a minimum.

45. The aforementioned assessment exercise also brought more clearly to light the fact that communication and training efforts will be paramount to support the roll-out of this new process and will have to be undertaken at various levels of management. In addition to senior-level engagement, hands-on training and communication and reference materials will be necessary to inform staff at large about concepts and approaches as well as key messages and issues.

46. A small and independent advisory group on internal controls that included both academic experts and practitioners was set up to provide advice on the technical aspects of the application of the conceptual framework at the United Nations.

47. The experience so far has clearly revealed that many challenges lie ahead for this project. For example, the many operational and mandate-driven demands that are placed on all entities make the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of internal controls and their definition paramount. Furthermore, the change management aspect of introducing a new process based on an international best practice framework is more challenging than initially expected, as it introduces new concepts, terminologies and processes, all of which require increased communication and training efforts to make this initiative a success.

48. In addition, senior management and structural changes that have an impact on the control environment, such as further roll-outs of Umoja, the introduction of a global service delivery model and ongoing management reform initiatives will have a more significant impact on internal controls than initially foreseen, as they could further change roles, responsibilities and organizational structures.

49. Important feedback has been received on where and how to best house within entities the expanded assurance function, which requires dedicated focus and visibility across many functional areas. In that connection, the importance of a

central function within the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts to carry out effective management assessment of internal controls cannot be overemphasized. Only ongoing monitoring, spot checks and a horizontal view of possible control issues will lead to adequate mitigating controls and a management culture that attaches importance to this area of work with a view to the fulfilment of the Organization's mandate to utilize and be accountable for the resources entrusted to it.

50. As a way forward, a series of workshops will be conducted in 2017 with peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping entities to further train participants on concepts and approaches, identify the right mix of cost controls and refine internal controls and possible required assurances. In addition, various initiatives will be used to engage senior managers, with a focus placed on control environment tasks.

51. On the basis of the aforementioned considerations, including the availability of the required resources, the estimated timelines for the implementation of a statement of internal control have shifted to the financial year 2017/18 for peacekeeping entities and the year 2018 for non-peacekeeping entities.

3. Management of the IPSAS regulatory framework

52. In order to keep the IPSAS regulatory framework up to date, a dedicated process is required to validate all new policy documents and translate them into regulatory documents. Managing the regulatory framework will include:

(a) Monitoring and participating in the development of IPSAS standards;

(b) Keeping the United Nations Policy Framework for IPSAS and corporate guidance up to date;

(c) Supporting the 13 United Nations organizations that produce a set of IPSAS-compliant financial statements;

(d) Providing conceptual training to accounting staff;

(e) Working with the offices affected to assess the degree of impact on operations. For example, the IPSAS team is currently working with the Office of Central Support Services to collect data about heritage assets.

53. The IPSAS Board continues to develop new standards as well as to change and update existing standards. Currently, the IPSAS Board is working on 12 projects, of which 6 will have an impact on the United Nations. In addition to those six projects, one project, infrastructure assets, which will have an impact on the United Nations, is expected to commence in December 2017. When these projects are completed by the IPSAS Board, the United Nations will be required to adopt the standards in the prescribed period. The major areas in which standards are being developed are as follows:

(a) Heritage items: a standard is being developed that has significant implications for financial reporting owing to the high volume of heritage assets held by the Organization. Currently, IPSAS does not require the recognition of such assets on the financial statements and note disclosure is optional. The new standard would make the recognition of such assets mandatory. In many cases, there are no comparable assets that can be used to derive a value, and consequently valuation experts would have to be hired. It is therefore critical that the United Nations participate in the development of this standard;

(b) Leases: upon the completion of this project, a new IPSAS standard will replace IPSAS 13: Leases. While all operating leases are currently expensed, the new standard will require all leases with a duration of more than a year to be

recognized as finance leases, for which assets and liabilities will be brought onto the face of the financial statements. An exposure draft (a first version of the new standard) is expected in September 2017;

(c) Revenue and non-exchange expenses: these two projects will have an impact on the voluntary contribution revenues and corresponding accounts receivable and will address when obligations and liabilities arise for donors and how liabilities should be measured. That in turn is expected to have an impact on grants and other transfers;

(d) Financial instruments: this project is aimed at updating IPSAS 29: Financial instruments: recognition and measurement and amending IPSAS 28: Financial instruments: presentation and IPSAS 30: Financial instruments: disclosures. The project will have an impact on the United Nations accounting and reporting of the cash pool and other financial assets. An exposure draft is expected after the June 2017 meeting of the IPSAS Board, with revised IPSAS standards expected by March 2018;

(e) Public sector measurement: this project is aimed at issuing amended IPSAS standards with revised requirements for measurements at initial recognition, subsequent measurement and measurement-related disclosure; providing more detailed guidance on the implementation of replacement cost; and addressing transaction costs. The project will have an impact on the measurement of United Nations assets and liabilities;

(f) Infrastructure assets: the Board is preparing to start discussions on this project, which is expected to have an impact on the United Nations.

54. IPSAS compliance by the United Nations continues to be affected by new and updated standards issued by the IPSAS Board. Therefore, dedicated resources are required to continuously monitor and participate in setting standards and translating them into the Policy Framework for IPSAS, corporate guidance and other policy documents in order to ensure sustained compliance with IPSAS.

4. Strengthening of Umoja as the backbone of IPSAS-compliant accounting and reporting

55. Umoja continues to serve as the backbone of long-term IPSAS sustainability, which requires continuous updates to the IPSAS/Umoja accounting manual, the further automation of the financial statement process, the deployment of Umoja for asset accounting at field missions, and substantial contributions to the Umoja continuous improvements work stream.

IPSAS/Umoja accounting manual

56. The IPSAS/Umoja accounting manual incorporates both IPSAS policies and Umoja processes and activities in one location so that practitioners and managers have an organization-wide repository at their disposal to assist with every aspect of their work related to financial accounting. The manual allows every user and every staff member of the United Nations to go to one location, select a topic, learn about the related IPSAS policy of the Organization and follow the corresponding step-by-step process to complete IPSAS-compliant transactions in Umoja.

57. A dedicated user-friendly website was developed to host the manual, permitting ready accessibility to the information needed. The current website also hosts important IPSAS documents, including the Policy Framework, IPSAS corporate guidance documents, and the IPSAS benefits realization plan and benefits realization booklet, as well as a link to the IPSAS handbooks.

58. A continuous and dedicated effort will be required by the IPSAS team to keep the manual updated as both IPSAS and Umoja evolve.

Automation of financial statements (business planning and consolidation)

59. Since the issuance of the ninth progress report, the business planning and consolidation subproject has been launched to automate the production of IPSAS-compliant financial statements for the Secretariat reporting entities that utilize Umoja. The financial statements for Volume II, United Nations peacekeeping operations, as at 30 June 2016 were the first to be produced under the business planning and consolidation subproject and were completed by the deadline of 30 September 2016.

60. The IPSAS-compliant financial statements for Volume I, United Nations, and the other non-peacekeeping reporting entities (the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Trade Centre, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals) for the year ended 31 December 2016 were successfully produced under the business planning and consolidation subproject and were completed by the deadline of 31 March 2017. Later in 2017, financial statements for Volume II, United Nations peacekeeping operations, will be produced under the subproject for the second consecutive year.

61. The use of business planning and consolidation has resulted in a streamlined process for producing consolidated financial statements, reducing the time spent in that regard. All data and adjustments uploaded are fully documented and stored with a distinctive audit trail, providing a single, centralized view of Umoja data. As a result of increased automation in the consolidation process, resources are now directed towards more analytical work. The reduction in manual errors is an additional advantage stemming from the use of business planning and consolidation.

62. The next phase of the automation of financial statements includes disclosure and notes management, which is expected to produce harmonized note disclosures for all of the Secretariat reporting entities that utilize Umoja.

Plan to deploy Umoja for asset accounting at field missions

63. Currently, equipment and inventory assets for peacekeeping and special political missions are managed in Galileo. Galileo is used to track detailed information, including cost, depreciation and useful life.

64. In September 2017, property, plant and equipment and inventory assets for peacekeeping and special political missions will be migrated to Umoja. That deployment will eliminate the need to produce Galileo reports with equipment and inventory balances, which are manually posted in Umoja for the preparation of financial statements. The conversion of those balances will provide visibility with respect to fixed asset and inventory balances in the statement of financial position in real time, allowing for more effective monitoring. That should lead to the improved management of assets, given that detailed information will be readily and centrally available for financial, budgetary and operational purposes.

Continuous improvement of Umoja

65. Financial accounting master data in Umoja need to be maintained and changes relating to new master data supported. This includes the review and approval or rejection of requests for new general ledger accounts, namely, changes to the tables of accounts, coordination with both of the budget divisions of the Office of

Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts with respect to general ledger accounts that affect budgeting, and coordination with the Umoja team for the configuration of approved new general ledger accounts.

66. Umoja users are continuously submitting change requests that would either improve transactional efficiency or provide for better management information. Extensive tests are required to ensure that IPSAS compliance is not impeded by the proposed process changes. This will require coordination within the Umoja team and sometimes across functional areas, including procurement, logistics, service delivery, travel, human resources and treasury.

67. The continuous improvement of Umoja is critical for IPSAS sustainability, and the IPSAS team will continue to work closely with the Umoja team on further enhancements to the Umoja system to ensure the long-term sustainability of IPSAS.

5. Training and skills development

68. Training and skills development is an inherent part of all IPSAS sustainability efforts and includes specialized training, available on the Inspira training platform, on the IPSAS standards and IPSAS benefits realization awareness training. In addition, the online IPSAS/Umoja accounting manual helps staff at large to perform their functions in an IPSAS-compliant manner and keep abreast with the ongoing evolution of IPSAS standards. During the reporting period, the Organization stepped up the dissemination of plans for the introduction of a statement of internal control and an underlying assurance process.

69. The pilot programme aimed at the professionalization of finance staff made limited progress, with two candidates pursuing the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy professional qualification, as the initiative was inhibited by budgetary constraints. On the basis of the positive feedback received from the candidates, the Organization is working to expand the pilot before embarking on a formal programme in line with its policy on learning and development. The Organization will be mindful of the availability of human and financial resources as it considers options for collaborating with other organizations of the United Nations system that have similar programmes.

70. With Umoja becoming the book of record during the reporting period, except with regard to equipment transactions, which are still recorded in Galileo, the Organization focused on the training of staff in all of the major processes handled in Umoja. The objective of the training was to enable participants to understand the end-to-end processes and integration points, to perform basic and complex transactions, including running and producing reports, and to diagnose and troubleshoot frequent user errors and raise requests through iNeed tickets. A combination of training on Umoja modules such as those on financial accounting, funds management and grants management and the involvement of staff in testing changes to the Umoja system was undertaken to ensure that staff at various levels became proficient in the use of the system.

71. The annual workshop for chief budget and finance officers of peacekeeping missions, held in Brindisi, Italy, and the workshop for chief financial officers of non-peacekeeping entities, held in Nairobi, provided in-depth training on the financial statement preparation process and the required closing activities and included an increased focus on internal control issues and on the dissemination of plans for the introduction of a statement of internal control. In addition to specific aspects of internal control training, the workshops served as ways to enable the broader change management and training effort to deepen the Organization's general understanding of internal controls. During the workshops, case studies based on United Nations scenarios were used to bring to life for participants key

risks and required controls for the financial reporting objectives of the United Nations. Each workshop had approximately 30 participants, from entities that included both peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping operations. The outputs of the workshops will be used to create a repository of knowledge on the major internal control risks faced by the Organization and the key actions required for the management of those risks.

72. Various activities aimed at the training of managers and staff at large are planned to be held with peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping entities, ranging from senior-level engagements with heads of departments, offices and missions to the training of staff at large on internal control responsibilities and requirements.

E. Project budget and expenditure as at 30 June 2017

73. The General Assembly, in its resolution 60/283, approved the resources requested for the implementation of IPSAS.

74. The table below presents a breakdown by funding source of the total expenditure for the period 2006-2017 as at 30 June 2017. The indicative budget of $27 million for the IPSAS implementation project, prior to the detailed planning of sustainability activities, comprises $12.8 million from the support account, $10 million from the regular budget and $4.2 million from extrabudgetary resources (see A/67/564, para. 17). The actual expenditure to 30 June 2017 is $26.2 million, excluding $4.2 million in cumulative expenditure under extrabudgetary funds. The estimated expenditure to 31 December 2017 is $26.8 million.

Project budget and expenditure for IPSAS adoption at the United Nations

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Object of expenditure	*Expenditure[a] 2006-2015*	*Expenditure[b] 1 January 2016-30 June 2017*	*Total actual expenditure[b] 1 January 2006-30 June 2017*	*Approved allotment 2017*	*Projected expenditure[c] 1 July 2017-31 December 2017*	*Total estimated expenditure[c] 2006-2017*
Regular budget						
Posts	5 239.1	595.1	5 834.2	455.0	277.3	6 111.5
General temporary assistance	944.2	–	944.2	2.4	2.4	946.6
Consultants	272.9	4.0	276.9	–	–	276.9
Travel	313.8	50.6	364.4	42.0	38.2	402.6
Contractual services	74.0	14.9	88.9	1.5	1.5	90.4
Other	181.9	10.4	192.3	7.2	4.5	196.8
Section 29B, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts	**7 025.9**	**675.0**	**7 700.9**	**508.1**	**323.9**	**8 024.8**
Section 31, Jointly financed activities	1 948.0	18.6	1 966.6	289.2	289.2	2 255.8
Subtotal	**8 973.9**	**693.6**	**9 667.5**	**797.3**	**613.1**	**10 280.6**
Support account for peacekeeping operations						
General temporary assistance	4 660.6	978.2	5 638.7	–	–	5 638.7
Consultants	7 906.1	1 576.3	9 482.4	–	–	9 482.4

Object of expenditure	*Expenditure[a] 2006-2015*	*Expenditure[b] 1 January 2016-30 June 2017*	*Total actual expenditure[b] 1 January 2006-30 June 2017*	*Approved allotment 2017*	*Projected expenditure[d] 1 July 2017-31 December 2017*	*Total estimated expenditure[c] 2006-2017*
Travel	1 125.8	193.8	1 319.7	–	–	1 319.7
Other	38.6	54.3	92.9	–	–	92.9
Subtotal	**13 731.1**	**2 802.6**	**16 533.7**	**–**	**–**	**16 533.7**
Total	**22 705.0**	**3 496.2**	**26 201.2**	**797.3**	**613.1**	**26 814.3**

[a] Expenditure on a budget basis.
[b] Actual expenditure to 30 June 2017 as at 20 July 2017.
[c] Cumulative estimated expenditure to 31 December 2017 does not include expenditure of $4.2 million under extrabudgetary funds incurred by regional commissions and offices away from Headquarters.
[d] Allotment for 2017, less expenditure to 30 June 2017.

III. IPSAS and the United Nations system

75. Twenty-four organizations of the United Nations system that successfully completed their implementation of IPSAS continue to receive unqualified audit opinions. Those results attest to the capability of the United Nations system to sustain compliance with IPSAS, which continues to evolve through changes made to the standards on a regular basis, in order to improve the quality of financial reporting, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability.

76. The United Nations system Task Force on Accounting Standards is currently focused on sustaining IPSAS compliance and the realization of the planned benefits of IPSAS, including greater comparability of financial reporting policies and practices across the United Nations system. Some of these post-implementation activities present challenges.

77. One of the key contributing factors with respect to sustaining IPSAS compliance is the ongoing engagement by the Task Force with the IPSAS Board, which continues to update standards and issue guidance in response to user needs and changing environments, seeking public comments before a standard is finalized. Monitoring the work of the IPSAS Board, keeping Task Force members updated on new pronouncements and upcoming projects, and providing feedback to the IPSAS Board on behalf of the United Nations system are some of the key activities of the system-wide IPSAS project team. The Board's current projects include many that could have a significant impact on the financial reporting carried out in the United Nations system, such as that on leases, heritage assets, financial instruments, exchange and non-exchange revenue and non-exchange expenses. The interpretation and implementation of IPSAS with regard to non-exchange transactions has been a particularly challenging area for the organizations of the United Nations system and has been a subject of collaboration with the IPSAS Board to ensure that the latter addresses the specificities of not-for-profit international organizations as distinguished from Governments.

78. In order to deal with the diversity of financial reporting across the United Nations system, the Task Force commissioned thematic focus groups led by member organizations with the support of the system-wide IPSAS project team. In 2016, the thematic groups reviewed and presented findings for the consideration and approval of the Task Force on: (a) the analysis of the main common arrangements of the United Nations system in accordance with IPSAS standards 34 to 38, on accounting for interests in other entities; (b) the revised useful economic lives and impairment model for property, plant and equipment; (c) the harmonization of after-service

health insurance accounting and valuation methodologies; and (d) common terminology for financial statements issued by the organizations of the United Nations system. Some of the thematic groups are continuing their activities in 2017. These efforts are important for harmonizing accounting practices and improving the comparability of financial statements.

79. In November 2016, the Finance and Budget Network endorsed the revised terms of reference of the Task Force, which had been adapted to its post-implementation focus. The changes made included revisions to ensure that the terms of reference are sufficiently broad to cover the future activities of the Task Force, to change the procedure for electing the Chair and the Vice-Chair and to remove the mandatory requirement that two meetings of the Task Force be held per year.

80. The proposed budget for the United Nations system-wide IPSAS project for 2018-2019 was endorsed by the Finance and Budget Network in March 2017 and included a staffing requirement for one P-5 post. The role of the project team includes: (a) providing support to the Task Force by facilitating its meetings and communication with high-level committees and external auditors; (b) monitoring activities of the IPSAS Board, including by attending its quarterly meetings as far as possible; (c) supporting the analysis and management of the diversity of IPSAS-compliant financial reporting; and (d) providing guidance and support in areas of special interest identified by the Task Force.

IV. Outlook

81. As at the end of 2016, the United Nations had prepared and presented IPSAS-compliant financial statements for all 13 reporting entities for three successive years, for its peacekeeping operations up to the year ended 30 June 2016 and for its non-peacekeeping operations up to the year ended 31 December 2016. All financial statements received an unqualified audit opinion. The most recently submitted financial statements for its peacekeeping operations, for the financial year ended 30 June 2017, are currently under audit.

82. This great accomplishment is a confirmation of the Organization's strong commitment and efforts aimed at IPSAS compliance and its ability to be aligned with international best practices. The United Nations has gained significant momentum in updating its practices, making more information available to management and Member States, and monitoring its performance on the basis of new information generated by IPSAS and Umoja. As this reform is an ongoing process, it can be expected that benefits realization will continue and will be significant. The full realization of benefits will require time, and the sustainability of compliance with IPSAS will require dedicated resources.

83. This positive outlook is impeded by a newly identified risk, discussed in section II.C above, which is the loss of specialized technical skills and the abolishment of IPSAS-related positions. In the light of (a) the high level of activity at the IPSAS Board and the continuing changes to the IPSAS standards requiring analysis by finance staff in terms of their impact on the worldwide operations of the United Nations, (b) the activities required to implement and sustain an assurance-based process for the strengthening of internal controls, and (c) the upcoming deployment of Umoja Extension 2, which will increase complexity and significantly increase the need for support, principally in the area of asset accounting for missions, it is apparent that the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts will not be able to absorb all key activities identified in the ninth progress report as critical to supporting IPSAS sustainability. This effectively places at risk the sustainability of IPSAS at the United Nations. That risk, which is highly

probable without adequate capacity, will increase the likelihood of failure to carry out or keep up with the activities necessary to comply with IPSAS and could potentially lead to qualified audit opinions, with its attendant negative consequences.

84. In paragraph 79 of the ninth progress report, it was indicated that a supporting structure was necessary to carry out sustainability activities in four areas to drive continued IPSAS compliance: accounting policy, Umoja coordination, asset accounting and assurance and monitoring.

85. In addition to the existing posts within the Accounts Division that have already been reprofiled to meet some of the new demands, six posts (1 P-5, 3 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)) will be required to handle the critical activities outlined in paragraph 17 above. Three of those posts (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 General Service (Other level)) had already been approved as part of the staffing complement of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and have been proposed for redeployment from executive direction and management to component 3, Accounting, contributions and financial reporting, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 so as to consolidate all IPSAS sustainability functions. The remaining three posts had been requested under the support account for the financial period 2017/18, of which only one was approved.

86. The implementation of IPSAS and the implementation of Umoja are two of the largest transformational projects undertaken successfully by the Secretariat with a number of interdependencies. The projects provide the Organization with a global view of IPSAS-compliant data, including personnel data, accounts payable, payments, resource mobilization and utilization, budget consumption and funds availability across entities and funding sources, commitments, goods receipts, contribution agreements and travel data, which will lead to more informed decisions. IPSAS compliance and the realization of IPSAS benefits depend on Umoja processes, while the design of Umoja processes and the realization of Umoja benefits depend on the establishment of clear, simple and consistent accounting policies for all Secretariat entities. The withdrawal of IPSAS resources dedicated to sustaining IPSAS over the long term is premature at this critical juncture and will result in the immediate erosion of benefits painstakingly built up over the life of the project and increase the probability of qualified audit opinions. In addition, it will impair the coordination with the Umoja team that is essential to the development of IPSAS-compliant processes, for a significant number of the Umoja Extension 2 processes that will continue to be designed, built and deployed through 2018 and 2019. Furthermore, specialized technical skills built gradually over the life of the IPSAS project will be immediately lost through the loss of staff and will not be easy to replace, as such skills are not readily available internally or externally.

87. The costs of implementing IPSAS and sustaining compliance have been shared by the regular budget as well as the budgets that fund peacekeeping operations, the largest beneficiaries of IPSAS. The standardized categorization of property, plant and equipment and inventory, and the integration of purchases with inventory and assets, enforce accountability for these assets, which benefits not only peacekeeping operations, but also special political missions, regional commissions, Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters. Given that recent reports of the Board of Auditors point to major deficiencies in asset management and asset accounting, the benefits of consistent and improved asset accounting and accountability far outweigh the investment in the posts requested under the support account and the programme budget. Without capacity to sustain IPSAS, the statement of internal control project referred to in section II.D.2 above, a significant endeavour, will be seriously jeopardized and likely postponed or scaled back, and the Administration will need to devolve support functions that are currently centralized to peacekeeping

missions and, in parallel, create the capacity in the missions to undertake such responsibilities. That will require peacekeeping missions to take on additional responsibilities and accountability.

88. Any further cuts in existing IPSAS posts will impose a serious burden on the Organization, and the consequences outlined above must be considered in their totality. The very real risk of qualified audit opinions as a result of the inability to carry out or keep up with the activities necessary to comply with IPSAS due to the non-approval of the requested resources cannot be overemphasized.

V. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

89. The General Assembly is requested to take note of the present and final report on the adoption of IPSAS, including the plan to support continued IPSAS compliance, as well as the challenges thereof.

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Sustainable development

Follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/225, the present report addresses the follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway). It contains an analytical account, among other things, of the implementation of the priorities of the small island developing States, as identified in the Samoa Pathway, and the various themes highlighted in the resolution, including activities by Member States and the relevant United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies and regional commissions, as appropriate, taking into account the work carried out by the organizations of the United Nations system as well as all relevant national, regional and subregional organizations.

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I. Introduction

1. The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), the formal outcome document of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (Samoa Conference),[1] was endorsed by the General Assembly in November 2014 (see resolution 69/15). In its resolution on the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy adopted at the same session (see resolution 69/217), the Assembly reaffirmed the outcome document and, among other things, recalled the sustainable development priorities for small island developing States contained therein and stressed the need to ensure its effective implementation, monitoring and follow-up. This reaffirmation and call were reiterated by the Assembly in 2015 and 2016 (see resolutions 70/202 and 71/225).

2. In September 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), containing 17 Sustainable Development Goals that represent global aspirations, covering the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development that are universally applicable to both developed and developing countries. The Assembly has since consistently recalled the sustainable development priorities of small island developing States, as identified in the Samoa Pathway and in the 2030 Agenda, and repeatedly called for their effective implementation, monitoring and follow-up (see resolution 70/202, paras. 2 and 4; and resolution 71/225, paras. 2 and 5).

3. The present report is divided into four main sections, including a brief introduction and conclusion. Sections II and III present an account of the progress made towards furthering the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda, including, among other things, the implementation of the commitments and partnerships announced at the Samoa Conference. Also included in the narrative are activities directed at addressing the vulnerabilities and priorities of small island developing States and at integrating or mainstreaming the Samoa Pathway and 2030 Agenda into national and regional development policies and cooperation frameworks. The report further elaborates the monitoring and follow-up activities undertaken during the reporting period. In compiling the report, the Secretariat solicited information, including through questionnaires, from Member States, the relevant United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and the relevant national, regional and subregional organizations. The contribution of Nauru was the sole submission from a Member State.[2]

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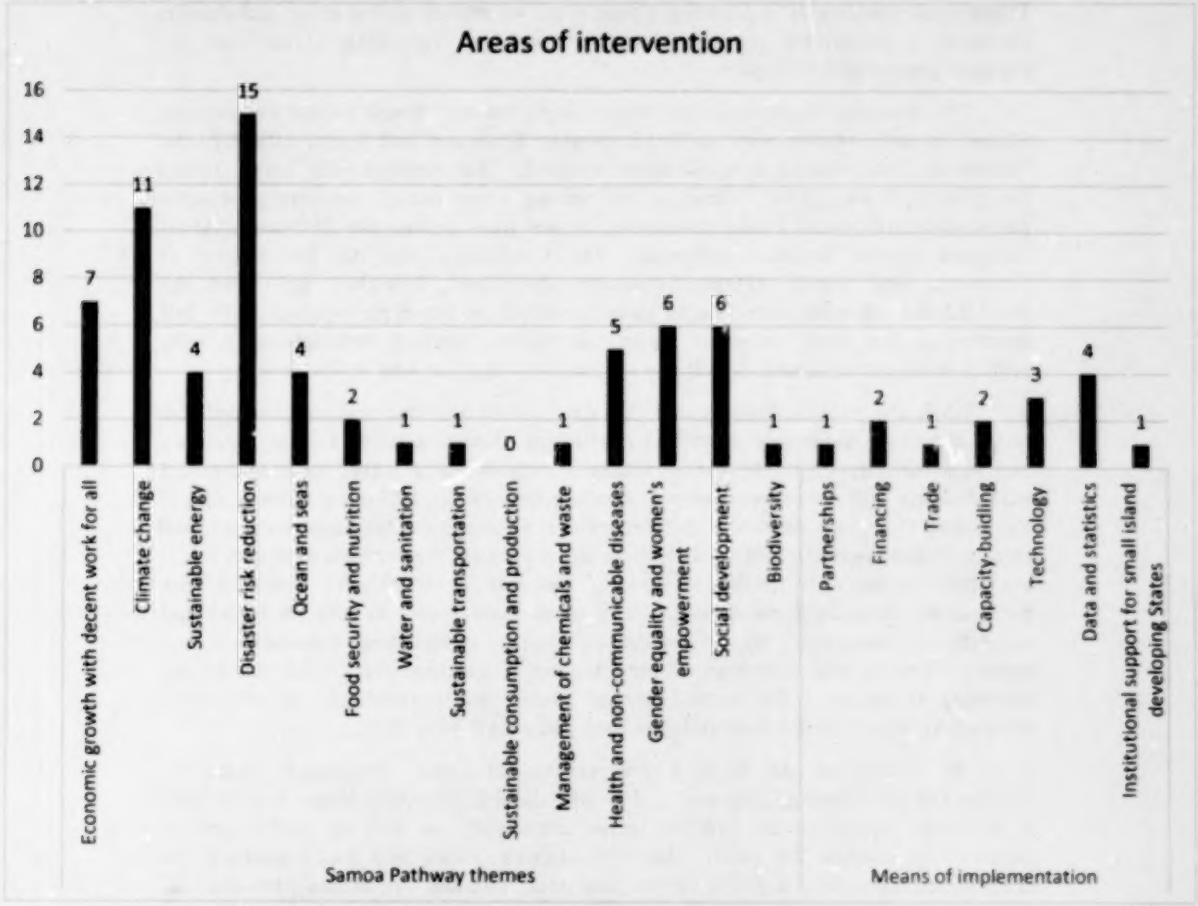
[1] A/CONF.223/10, chap. I, resolution 1.

[2] Inputs were received from the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, the Population Division and the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat; the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR); the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS); the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); the World Meteorological Organization (WMO); the International Trade Centre (ITC); the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions; the International Monetary Fund (IMF); the International Organization for Migration (IOM); the International Renewable Energy Agency; the United Nations country team for Asia and the Pacific; the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); the Commonwealth Secretariat; and the Government of Nauru.

4. A simple counting of the thematic areas in which activities were reported for the current period resulted in the figure presented below. It should be noted that when an activity was relevant to more than one theme, it was counted under both themes.

Activities on Samoa Pathway themes and their means of implementation



II. Implementation of the Samoa Pathway

5. The present section elaborates the various activities and initiatives undertaken during the reporting period on the follow-up to and implementation of the Samoa Pathway and addresses the issues set out in General Assembly resolution 71/255.

A. Partnerships for small island developing States

6. Cooperation and partnerships are not new concepts at the United Nations, however, the way partnerships have been leveraged to facilitate the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals in small island developing States reflects a shift that could offer a model for multilateral development efforts. The sentiments highlighted in paragraph 3 of resolution 71/225 are addressed below. In 2015, pursuant to paragraph 101 of the Samoa Pathway, the

General Assembly established the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework (see resolution 70/202, para. 11) to monitor and ensure the full implementation of pledges and commitments and to promote the effective and efficient follow-up to existing partnerships for small island developing States, including those launched at the Samoa Conference,[3] and to encourage new, genuine and durable ones for the sustainable development of those States. The Partnership Framework consists of: a Steering Committee; an annual global multi-stakeholder dialogue, a partnership reporting template; and the organizing of national and regional partnership dialogues.

7. The Steering Committee on Partnerships for the Small Island Developing States,[4] in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, has issued a publication entitled: "Partnerships for Small Island Developing States 2016",[5] devoted to, among other things, reviewing selected partnerships for small island developing States from among the 300 partnerships launched at the Samoa Conference. The Committee and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs have also developed, launched and used the standardized reporting template to gather updates on these partnerships. The full description for each progress report, including detailed descriptions of the partnerships, can be found at: http://www.sids2014.org/partnership/reports/.

8. While the publication revealed that most of the assessed partnerships were on track, the most commonly described challenges identified relate to: the adequacy and sustainability of funds; the increased transaction and travel costs associated with distance and remoteness; communication limitations, including Internet access and connectivity; sociocultural differences and sensitivities; language barriers; and certain country-specific political risks, such as change in government and political uncertainties prior to and/or following national elections. As noted in the publication, successful partnerships have often been found to rely on broad and meaningful engagement by all sectors of society, surrounding communities and peoples. Two formal meetings of the Steering Committee were held during the reporting period and the second annual global multi-stakeholder small island developing States partnership dialogue took place on 7 June 2017.

9. The Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States has initiated a series of activities on private sector promotion as well as public-private partnerships models for small island developing States and has continued the operationalization of the SIDS Global Business Network,[6] an online platform and resource hub aiming to improve connections between entities in the national and regional private sectors of small island developing States, global businesses and other relevant stakeholders. The Network contributes to the enhanced exchange of best practices and lessons learned, peer-learning among and between small island developing States and the global community and strengthened collaboration among regional private sector organizations.

10. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has continued to promote its partnership arrangements with more than 17 small island developing States, specifically with the relevant national institutions responsible for

[3] More details on these partnerships including the updates can be found at www.sids2014.org/partnerships.

[4] Co-chaired by Italy and Maldives.

[5] Available from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2364Publication%202016%20read.pdf.

[6] See https://sidsgbn.org/.

housing or urban/territorial development.[7] Activities under these partnership initiatives were supported by funding from the European Commission, the United States Agency for International Development and the American Red Cross and Cities Alliance. UN-Habitat has direct partnerships with more than 50 cities and maintains partnerships with other relevant urban organizations, including the Caribbean Network for Urban and Land Management, the Caribbean Planners Association, the Pacific Islands Local Government Association Network and the University of the West Indies.

11. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Pacific Islands Programme contributes to eight of the partnerships announced at the Samoa Conference, namely: the Pacific Partnership for Action on Safe Water and Sanitation; the Pacific Partnership for Atoll Water Security; the Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood Care and Education; the Protecting Children from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation in the Pacific programme; the Scaling up the Maternal, New-born and Child Health programme in the Pacific; the office of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases in the Pacific; the Pacific Youth Development Framework Partnership; and the Supporting Comprehensive Sexuality Education in the Pacific programme.[8]

12. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continued to implement and engage in the commitments and partnerships announced at the Samoa Conference. Examples of these include the Japan-Caribbean Climate Change Partnership project, the Regional Disaster Resilience in the Pacific Small Island Developing States project, the Pacific Adaptation for Climate Change project, the Pacific Risk Resilience Programme, the Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Programme and the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme.

13. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as Chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth, has collaborated with the Pacific Community, the Pacific Youth Council, the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNICEF, UNDP, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN-Women on the production of the forthcoming edition of *The State of Pacific Youth*.[9]

14. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has partnered with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute and the Pacific Community on issues in the areas of food and nutrition security, forestry and improved capacities on enhanced production technologies. Examples of these partnerships include Fisheries Conservation in the Wider Caribbean Region through the FAO Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission, the Global Framework for Climate Services for the Small Island Developing States, the Global Partnership for Oceans, the Global Partnership on Marine Litter and the Pacific Alliance for Sustainability.

15. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has continued to implement several partnerships launched during the Samoa Conference, including the Pacific Heritage Hub; Heritage strengthening in the Pacific; Sandwatch — a global observatory of changing environments in small island developing States; Bridging the GAP: Driving partnerships for the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development; and Enhancing South-South cooperation for capacity-building in science.

16. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has collaborated with its partners and stakeholders to overcome the challenges confronting the small island

[7] See http://open.unhabitat.org/project/41120-2384/.

[8] See www.unicef.org/pacificislands/.

[9] See www.unicef.org/pacificislands/State_of_the_Pacific_Youth_Report_web.pdf.

developing States with regard to information and communications technology (ICT) broadband telecommunication services.

17. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has continued its partnership initiatives with various organizations, including the Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, SIDS DOCK (the Small Island Developing States Sustainable Energy Initiative), the Austrian Development Agency, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and with representatives of the private sector, civil society and academia to advance the capacity of small island developing States to build cooperation with multilateral development financial institutions and international financial institutions and with private sector companies. Examples of these efforts include the establishment of a network of regional sustainable energy centres for small island developing States in the Caribbean, the Pacific, Africa and the Indian Ocean, in cooperation with SIDS DOCK, CARICOM and the Pacific Community.

18. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has ongoing partnerships with small island developing States on global intellectual property databases, indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expression, patent landscape reports and the technology and innovation support centres.

19. The International Trade Commission, through funding assistance from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, has implemented, in partnership with Pacific Governments and the private sector, the Pacific region's programme to empower women and girls,[10] which aims to increase income and employment opportunities for women. The Commission has also launched a new partnership with eBay that aims to boosts the capabilities of small and microenterprises in small island developing countries to participate in global digital commerce.

20. The UN-Women Caribbean Multi-Country Office has signed a memorandum of understanding with CARICOM to collaborate on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Samoa Pathway, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Women's Empowerment Principles. The memorandum of understanding seeks to enhance data, statistics and the analysis of the gender dimensions across the Caribbean region and to deepen the capacities of CARICOM members to implement international, regional and national commitments to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

21. The Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has focused its efforts on strengthening regional humanitarian coordination/cooperation and preparedness in the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific region.

22. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has continued to implement its global project on "Migration, environment and climate change: evidence for policy", a commitment that includes four small island developing States (the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mauritius and Papua New Guinea), and has focused on the question of vulnerabilities, climate and migration.

23. Nauru has reported that its Energy Road Map 2014-2020[11] was developed and adopted with the assistance of development partners, including the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative of the International Renewable Energy Agency. UNDP has supported the Government of Nauru by mapping government sector priorities to

[10] See http://dfat.gov.au/geo/pacific/development-assistance/pages/gender-equality-pacific-regional.aspx.

[11] See http://prdrse4all.spc.int/system/files/second_draft_nauru_energy_road_map_v6_0.pdf.

Sustainable Development Goal targets and assessing baseline national data and mapping to Sustainable Development Goal indicators. Furthermore, the Nauru Ridge to Reef project has targets to preserve biodiversity and ecosystem services, strengthen climate resilience and improve livelihoods.

B. Implementation and support for small island developing States

24. The present section addresses the issues contained in paragraphs 4, 7 and 9 to 12 of General Assembly resolution 71/225.

1. Addressing the vulnerabilities and priorities of small island developing States

25. Activities and solutions aimed at addressing the vulnerabilities and priorities of small island developing States as related to paragraph 4 of resolution 71/225 are described below.

26. Concerns about the consequences of environmental change continue to ascend to the top of the international agenda, bringing in their wake renewed attention to the complex interrelationships between population, environment and development. In recognition of this fact, during the reporting period the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has issued United Nations wall chart on population, environment and development in small island developing States, including several demographic and selected economic and environmental indicators. The Division publishes these data and the wall chart every two years in the publication *World Population Prospects*.[12]

27. The Small Island Developing States Unit in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, under the ninth tranche of the Development Account, has been implementing a project aimed at providing support for small island developing States in monitoring the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and assessing country performance in strengthening resilience for achieving sustainable development. The project, which is being executed in seven small island States, seeks to train participating States on the development of a vulnerability and country resilience profile. The profile provides a numerical score on a scale of 1 to 5 to assess the extent of vulnerabilities and resilience. The project comes to an end in December 2017. The Department, also through the Unit, in collaboration with the World Bank, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, organized an event for small island developing States disaster risks resilience practitioners on the margins of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, in Cancun, Mexico, in June 2017. Building on the two earlier events organized by the World Bank, the participants in the event from small island developing States shared experiences and lessons learned and built networks.[13]

28. At the request of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States facilitated a dialogue between members of the Bureau of the Alliance of Small Island States and IMF, in Washington, D.C, in October 2016 that highlighted the work of IMF on promoting resilience in small island developing States, particularly in the areas of natural disasters and climate change. In November 2016, the Office participated in a

[12] Available from https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/.

[13] See http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/policies/v.php?id=53439.

workshop organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna to support the development of an interregional technical cooperation project for small island developing States. The project seeks to demonstrate how a number of sustainable development challenges in the areas of marine environment, cancer and food and nutrition security can be addressed using nuclear technology. The Office also participated in the World Bank-led Small States Forum, a platform for sharing best practices, advocating and exploring new solutions and fostering partnerships, in support of a more coherent international response to the special development challenges of small States, most of which are small island developing States.

29. The activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) included intergovernmental expert meetings on the implications of climate change on maritime transport, in particular, on the need to adapt the maritime sector to its adverse effects. Other relevant work included technical support for Caribbean small island developing States through a project funded under the ninth tranche of the Development Account that addresses the impacts of climate change on coastal transport infrastructure. The project, implemented over the 2015-2017 period, aims to strengthen the capacity of policymakers, transport planners and transport infrastructure managers to, among other things, understand the impacts of climate change on coastal transport infrastructure — in particular seaports and airports — and take appropriate adaptation response measures.

30. UN-Habitat has continued to implement at its Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, a global project funded by the European Commission.[14] Twelve small island developing States participated in this project, which aims to strengthen the capacity of policymakers and other stakeholders working together to improve the living conditions in slums and the sustainability of the cities through policy analysis, citywide slum upgrading, resource mobilization strategy development and participatory project implementation.

31. UNISDR has provided support to the Governments of Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau in developing loss accounting systems as a means of attaining commitments on disaster risk reduction and in support of risk-informed development. The Office also convened a training of trainers workshop for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Mauritius in June 2017.

32. The Sustainable Development and Disasters Unit of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has developed a comprehensive training course on the ECLAC disaster assessment methodology, which enables countries to undertake damage assessments following a disaster, and to advance awareness of the importance of identifying and reducing existing and new social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. Two training sessions on the Disaster Assessment Methodology were conducted in early 2017 to support small island developing States in the Caribbean region.

33. The Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in collaboration with ILO and UNDP, has been implementing a European Union-funded climate change project that supports the development of migration/labour policies and climate change strategies. ESCAP has also organized workshops and trainings in 2016/2017, involving participants from small island developing States in the Pacific, on strengthening multi-hazard risk assessment and early warning systems and disaster resilient agriculture, as well as activities on testing and establishing biogas technology in selected countries, providing support for establishing national disabilities policies in small island developing States in the region and strengthening national capacities to produce environmental data and statistics.

[14] See https://unhabitat.org/urban-initiatives/initiatives-programmes/participatory-slum-upgrading/.

34. UNICEF has implemented its country and multi-country programmes for small island developing States covering a wide range of issues affecting children and their caregivers, such as education, nutrition, water and sanitation and health. With a budget of $79,661,714, the programme covers 14 small island developing States. The Eastern Caribbean multi-country programme covers eight States with a budget of $31 million. Across the small island developing States, UNICEF has also paid particular attention to resilience-building and disaster risk management and reduction that address the impacts of environment and climate change on children.

35. UNDP has an extensive work programme spanning several thematic areas of the Samoa Pathway and broader efforts of the United Nations system on partnerships, institutional support to small island developing States and monitoring and accountability. UNDP is an active member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development, which seeks to raise awareness and expand the evidential base for a political conversation on "fit for purpose" financing for small island developing States. In the area of disaster risk reduction, a pilot initiative is being implemented to assess risk in urban areas. Initiatives in the Pacific include the Pacific Risk Resilience programme, the Regional Disaster Resilience in the Pacific programme, the Ridge-to-Reef programme and the Governance programme.

36. In terms of expenditure, in 2016, UNDP spent a total of $210.6 million in small island developing States, of which $43.6 million went to States in the African, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea regions; $50.5 million went to the small island developing States in the Pacific and $112.5 went to States in the Caribbean. A total of $4 million was spent on regional and global initiatives and activities. The table below presents the expenditure of UNDP in 2016 on the sustainable development priorities of small island developing States, as identified in the Samoa Pathway.

Expenditure of the United Nations Development Programme on priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway 2016

(Millions of United States dollars)

Priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway	*Expenditure*
Sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth	26.2
Climate change	35.3
Sustainable energy	1.5
Disaster risk reduction	16.7
Oceans and seas, water and sanitation, biodiversity	9 8
Waste management	9.3
Health	9.6
Gender equality	1.3
Social development	49.8
Means of implementation (including partnerships and institutional support)	10.1
Not specified (including governance)	26.8
Multi-outcome	14.2
Total expenditure	**210.6**

Source: Craig Hawke, "The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in small island developing States: presentation on UNDP support on voluntary national reviews in small island developing States", presented at a side event on small island developing States on the margins of the high-level political forum (13 July 2017).

37. UNFPA has provided support to the Caribbean and small island developing States in the Pacific region in drafting policies on sexual and reproductive health and domestic violence, assisted African small island developing States in formulating a report on the capacity assessment of the disaster reduction initiative and, as part of its minimum initial service package, provided support for the training of reproductive health service providers to deliver life-saving services to women and girls in emergency situations. In addition, UNFPA continued to provide support for the efforts of small island developing States to address limitations with respect to data capacities for population census and the development of population policies and programmes geared towards reducing health, socioeconomic and demographic inequalities.

38. The activities of FAO included: a project to assist small island developing States in integrating climate change considerations into the agricultural sectors and integrating agricultural considerations into the nationally determined contributions; the conduct of national workshops on the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing; [15] the provision of technical and financial support to small island developing States for aquaculture, as part of a movement towards blue growth initiatives; the provision of support for global processes on threatened species and biodiversity; and the formulation of a regional programme for food and nutrition security for small island developing States in the Indian Ocean.

39. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has continued to advance the implementation of its Resilience Pathways model, facilitating the integration of resilience planning for small island developing States across multiple sectors of their hard and soft infrastructure. The model represents a unique approach to addressing resilience within the context of all major global frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

40. ITU has implemented a number of projects and programmes to increase access to information and communications technology (ICT) and its use in small island developing States. Emphasis was placed on achieving universal access to telecommunications services, improved emergency telecommunications, the development of policies on ICT and appropriate regulations and legislation on ICT, particularly in the liberalization of the telecommunications sector and broadband development. ITU continued to assist the national computer incident response teams in Barbados and Jamaica. The teams work to strengthen cybersecurity by detecting threats and managing a timely response to cyberattacks.

41. UNESCO has adopted a SIDS action plan within its unique multidisciplinary expertise in natural sciences, culture, education, social sciences, communications and information. Developed in consultation with small island developing States, the plan contains key actions, plans, strategies and targets in line with the priorities set in the Samoa Pathway. Other initiatives include disaster risk reduction, building coastal and ocean resilience, reducing social vulnerabilities and increasing connectivity in times of crisis.

42. UNIDO focused on developing sustainable and affordable energy sources in small island developing States, expanding investment opportunities, developing small and medium-sized enterprises, strengthening institutional capacity-building and boosting industrial competitiveness. Its technical cooperation activities gave due prominence to gender mainstreaming and youth entrepreneurship/employment by ensuring their participation in various industrial sectors and providing capacity-

[15] The Agreement came into effect in July 2016.

building, education and training. Examples of specific technical cooperation include the development of an entrepreneurship curriculum programme for secondary schools in Cabo Verde and support for the implementation in Comoros of the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

43. The WIPO Technology and Innovation Support Centres have provided innovators in small island developing States with access to locally based, high-quality technological information and related services, helping them to create, protect and manage their intellectual property rights. WIPO has provided support for the efforts of Caribbean small island developing States to develop national intellectual property strategies that encourage and facilitate the effective creation, development, management and protection of intellectual property at the national level. This support contributes the establishment and consolidation of an environment for innovation. WIPO has also been addressing the sustainability of agribusiness in Caribbean small island developing States in an effort to stimulate the development of private enterprises in the agriculture sector through the provision of training to producers and other agricultural sector businesses, enhance their skills set and increase knowledge of the importance of the intellectual property system to the sector's development. The WIPO GREEN interactive marketplace project recognizes the need to access environmentally sound technologies to provide solutions to the challenges posed by sustainable development.

44. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has continued to implement its existing projects/programmes and resources, including the Climate Risk Early Warning Systems initiative, coastal inundation forecasting demonstration projects, a programme for implementing the Global Framework for Climate Services at the regional and national levels, a programme for building regional climate capacity in the Caribbean and a project on "Climate services to reduce vulnerability in Haiti". These initiatives provide support to small island developing States to increase their resilience to weather and climate-related events. Leveraging these projects allows for the coordination of investments and a more integrated planning around early warning systems.

45. Information and communications technologies assist small island developing States in increasing regional integration, exploiting niche products and services, ratifying trade agreements, improving trade facilitation and building the productive capacity of the private sector and policymakers to take advantage of trade opportunities. The E-solutions programme helps firms and businesses to better understand e-commerce and overcome barriers to selling goods and services on the Internet.

46. The Caribbean Office of UN-Women, in collaboration with UNICEF, has implemented a gender and child responsive approach to social protection programmes, one output of which was the development of the social protection bill in Antigua and Barbuda. The bill seeks to upgrade and modernize the legislative framework for social protection in that country, in accordance with the normative framework of human rights principles.

47. A technical assistance plan (2018-2021) for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions was welcomed at the meetings of the respective Conferences of the Parties, which were held back to back from 24 April to 5 May 2017. One of the guiding principles of the plan is the facilitation of the mobilization and leveraging of financial, technical and technological resources and expertise in support of developing country parties, including small island developing States.

48. The activities of the United Nations country team in the Pacific region are guided by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the region for

2013-2017. Signed by the Governments of 14 small island developing States in the Pacific, the Framework outlines the collective response of the United Nations system to the development challenges and national priorities of those States in five outcome areas, namely: environmental management, climate change and disaster risk management; gender equality; inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction; basic services (health and education); and governance and human rights. Alignment of the United Nations priorities in these areas has resulted in the creation of the Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council, a mechanism that allows the private sector to regularly engage with partners and Governments on ways to reduce risks from natural hazards and to prepare and respond to disasters.

49. The engagement of IMF with small island developing States includes surveillance, programme support and capacity-development activities. It is guided by a guidance note (updated in 2017) that highlights the unique economic characteristics and constraints confronting those States and provides operational guidance on the engagement of the Fund. IMF has also implemented several pilot studies in small island developing States on cross-cutting or emerging issues, targeting specific areas of need in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. To meet the financing needs of small States, the IMF Board has approved a 50 per cent increase in access limits to fund concessional resources and an increase in the annual access limits of the Rapid Credit Facility and the Rapid Financing Instrument, from 37.5 per cent to 60 per cent of new quotas for members facing severe disasters where the assessed damage is equivalent to or exceeds 20 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). The Fund's capacity development and technical assistance support to small developing island States remains significant.

50. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has focused its work on environmental and climate factors and their adverse impacts on migration. This includes support to a number of small island developing States in the Pacific for the: development of national protection-centred policy frameworks for displaced and host communities; development of model action plans to address migration; capacity-building for communities affected by climate change; development of disaster risk reduction activities; and field research to support the production of national reports on climate change vulnerabilities and migration.

51. The Commonwealth Secretariat has been examining the feasibility of using vulnerability as a criterion for accessing concessional financing, piloting a study in the Caribbean and Pacific regions to examine whether current development strategies set those regions on a path to achieving sustainability and implementing a resilience profiling project entitled "Building the resilience of small States."

52. The International Renewable Energy Agency has provided knowledge tools, services and a platform for cooperation (the Lighthouses Initiative) to facilitate the planning and implementation of renewable energy solutions in small island developing States. The initiative has 36 such States as members. It supports resource assessments, grid integration studies, energy transition plans and capacity-building activities across all small island developing States. Integral to the initiative is Quickscan, a simple but robust methodology to assess the readiness of small island developing States to deploy renewables within the power sector and "Guidelines on grid-related issues" relating to the integration of variable renewables into the grid.

53. The activities undertaken by the Government of Nauru include the implementation of the household scheme, entitled "Strengthening domestic resource mobilization", through broadening the government revenue base and tax reforms, ensuring fiscal sustainability by establishing and investing in the Nauru

intergenerational trust fund, investing in education infrastructure, addressing climate change, reducing dependence on fossil fuels and setting renewable energy targets.

2. Mainstreaming of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda into development and cooperation frameworks

54. The present subsection highlights activities and initiatives aimed at integrating or mainstreaming the Samoa Pathway and 2030 Agenda into national and regional development policies and cooperation frameworks, in response to paragraphs 9 to 12 of General Assembly resolution 71/225.

55. UNCTAD has mainstreamed the Samoa Pathway into its work on transport and trade logistics and across its three pillars of work, including research and analysis, technical assistance and capacity-building as well as consensus-building activities. A module entitled "Transitioning to low carbon shipping — sustainable sea transport solutions for SIDS: Pacific Island countries case studies" was developed to provide information on best practices and lessons learned for policymakers seeking to transition their sea transport to low carbon options.

56. The New Urban Agenda, which, among other things, addresses the urban development challenges of small island developing States, was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito in October 2016 (see General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex).

57. UNISDR continued its work supporting the efforts of small island developing States to mainstream the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (resolution 69/283, annex II) at the national level through the development of strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction and the formulation of the Sendai Framework indicators. At the subregional level, strategies, such as the Regional Comprehensive Management Strategy and Programming Framework 2014-2024 for the Caribbean region, were developed and aligned with the priorities and global targets set in the Sendai Framework.

58. Support provided by ESCAP to small island developing States in the Pacific is driven by its resolution 71/4 entitled: "Implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway", which, among other things, requested the Commission to assist those States in enhancing national capacities and institutions, voice and representation in regional and global processes and to monitor the follow-up to and implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda. ESCAP also participates in the development of United Nations Pacific Strategy 2018-2022, which uses 36 Sustainable Development Goals indicators as measures for its success.

59. The efforts of ECLAC towards the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals is carried out through the Technical Advisory Committee of its Regional Coordinating Mechanism for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. In February 2017, in collaboration with the German Agency for International Cooperation, ECLAC hosted a regional workshop to explore issues and strategies for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into the policy and planning frameworks for Caribbean small island developing States. ECLAC supports the implementation through direct technical cooperation and the facilitation of dialogue for prioritizing and monitoring progress towards implementation.

60. The UNICEF multi-country programmes contribute to aspects of the Samoa Pathway related to children. These programmes contain integrated results

frameworks with specific indicators, baselines, targets and progress indicators that are reported on annually. In developing country programmes, UNICEF consults national and regional bodies and other stakeholders to ensure alignment with their priorities as well as the global agenda on small island development States and the Sustainable Development Goals.

61. The work of UNDP is guided by its strategic plan for 2014-2017, which recognizes the special case for the development of small island developing States and the need for tailored development solutions. A new strategic plan (for 2018-2021) is currently under development. At the regional level, UNDP works closely with regional organizations to localize the Sustainable Development Goals. The UNDP subregional programme document 2018-2022 is being developed and will focus on a number of priority areas of the Samoa Pathway. At the national level, UNDP is supporting the efforts of small island developing States in the Pacific in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals and in ensuring a greater alignment between their national development plans and budgets and the targets set out in the Goals.

62. The UNFPA subregional programme document (2017-2021) for the Caribbean region is based on the United Nations Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework and guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, the Samoa Pathway and the CARICOM strategic plan for 2015-2019. UNFPA also supported some small island developing States members in the Pacific region to align their respective national development plans with the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals.

63. FAO launched the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States at the fortieth session of its General Conference in July 2017. The invitation for FAO to facilitate the formulation of the Global Action Programme was called for in paragraph 61 of the Samoa Pathway. Efforts towards its formulation were welcomed by the General Assembly in paragraph 7 of its resolution 71/225. As part of its continued efforts to implement the Programme, FAO has developed an interregional initiative on small island developing States, with inputs from regional offices.

64. ITU has integrated the Samoa Pathway into all its programmes and activities, while UNESCO has established a process to accompany the development and the implementation of its SIDS Action Plan for the sustainable development of small island developing States, at the local, national and regional levels, in cooperation with its worldwide networks and partners.

65. The long-term strategy of UNIDO of inclusive and sustainable industrial development aims to harness the full potential of industry's contribution to the achievement of sustainable development and lasting prosperity for all. UNIDO is determined to provide assistance to the Governments of small island developing States, as these countries are clearly mentioned in its programme and budget document as well as the medium-term programme framework.

66. WMO projects address challenges related to extreme weather, climate and water events and seek to provide small island developing States with the capacity and equipment necessary to successfully forecast the events and issue impact-based warnings that allow the public to act or react accordingly. Efforts are being made to engage more in existing coordination mechanisms at the country level to enable the alignment of plans of national meteorological and hydrological services with the United Nations and national strategic frameworks.

67. The programme of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), as with other United Nations system

agencies operating in the Pacific, is directly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. It ensures that all indicators of the results framework of the new United Nations Pacific Strategy (2018-2022) and the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework are aligned with the Goals and are being monitored by the Pacific island countries and territories themselves. The UN-Women Caribbean Multi-Country Office has collaborated with the CARICOM statistics programme to develop gender equality indicators for small island developing States in the Caribbean that would allow them to report on the Samoa Pathway, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

68. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2013-2017 for the Pacific region, which is a regional multi-country framework for United Nations assistance to Member States in the Pacific, is based on the regional and national development priorities of the small island developing States in the region. The Framework is complemented by the Pacific United Nations Development Assistance Framework multi-country action plan 2013-2017, the operational plan for implementing 14 individual country-specific output level results matrices that are tailored to each country's priorities. The Development Assistance Framework is broadly aligned with regional priorities as defined in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, and its results framework resonates strongly with the Samoa Pathway and represents genuine and durable partnerships, mainly at the country level.

69. The work of OCHA in the Asia-Pacific region on emergency preparedness and policy engagement in disaster risks resilience is fully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework and the regional strategy adopted at the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in New Delhi in 2016. The IOM network of country offices and sub-offices in a number of small island developing States is responsible for analysing national migration issues and emerging trends and to plan, develop and implement projects and programmes. The Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals are fully mainstreamed into these plans, programmes and projects.

70. The new strategic plan 2017/18-2020/21 of the Commonwealth Secretariat targets results that are aligned to the achievement of 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that programmes and the provision of technical assistance strengthen the national plans of member States to achieve their Sustainable Development Goal priorities through more evidence-based and participatory planning, monitoring and evaluations. The plan also targets greater national and regional programming coherence, partnerships and networks. The work programme of the International Renewable Energy Agency for 2016-2017 as a whole is aligned with Goal 7, ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and the 2030 Agenda.

71. The Government of Nauru, with support from UNDP, has planned a nationwide consultation in 2017 with key stakeholders to heighten awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and to localize and mainstream the 2030 Agenda into national planning and budget processes. At the regional level, the regional Sustainable Development Goal road map is being developed to jointly monitor progress on the Goals, the Framework for Pacific Regionalism and the implementation of the Samoa Pathway, and it is expected that it will be endorsed by the leaders of the Pacific Island Forum in September 2017.

C. Linking the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda to global processes

72. The following paragraphs examine how the sustainable development priorities of small island developing States, as set out in the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, were addressed or given due consideration in the relevant major United Nations conferences and processes during the reporting period, and respond to the sentiments echoed in paragraphs 5, 11 and 14 of General Assembly resolution 71/225.

73. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs provided supported the Government of the Bahamas in hosting a symposium entitled "Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Samoa Pathway in small island developing States: equipping public institutions and mobilizing partnerships", in Nassau in February 2017.[16] The seminar focused on how small island developing States are organizing their respective government institutions to further support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Department also provided support to the Caribbean small island developing States in the development of a preliminary core set of indicators from among the tier I/II Sustainable Development Goal indicators approved by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. In an effort to assist small island developing States in preparing for the high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (the Ocean Conference), the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department, in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development, organized a Small Islands Developing States Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (the Ocean Conference) in Jeju, Republic of Korea, in March 2017,[17] providing those States with a space to discuss and share ideas on how to advance their priorities at the Ocean Conference.

74. The Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States undertook a comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in 2016,[18] at which a number of issues relevant to small island developing States, including vulnerability to climate change and graduation from the list of least developed countries, were addressed. In October 2016, during Habitat III, the Office, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Alliance of Small Island States organized a high-level meeting on urban resilience and sustainable urban development in small island developing States to address the diversity of urban issues and to provide guidance on the best ways small island developing States can enhance the resilience and sustainability of their human settlements.

75. In November 2016 in Mauritius, UNISDR hosted the sixth Africa Regional Platform and the fifth high-level meeting on disaster risk reduction, which resulted in the formulation of the programme of action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2-15-2030 in Africa.[19] A key highlight of

[16] See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&nr=2116&type=13&menu=1634.
[17] See www.unosd.org/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=78&menu=177.
[18] See http://unohrlls.org/midterm-review-ipoa.
[19] See www.unisdr.org/we/inform/events/49455; and www.preventionweb.net/files/49455.

the conference was a special session on tsunami awareness. The annual Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management was held in Suva, in October 2016. The outcome statement of the meeting reaffirmed the political commitment of the small island developing States of the Pacific to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and its related regional Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific: An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, with countries pledging to step up and further integrate their efforts to strengthen disaster resilience.

76. UN-Habitat is the focal point of the United Nations system for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the outcome document of Habitat III (see General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex). The Agenda makes specific reference to small island developing States in paragraphs 6, 19, 64, and 114 (c). Particular attention is given to addressing the unique and emerging urban development challenges confronting these States.

77. The subregional headquarters of ECLAC in the Caribbean continued to advocate the challenges and priorities of small island developing States in regional meetings and processes, such as in the Caribbean Development Round Table and the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. These efforts represent the continued commitment of ECLAC to providing a mechanism that facilitates the cross-fertilization of ideas in support of the implementation and mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Caribbean region.

78. UNFPA provided support to the efforts of the Caribbean small island developing States to hold subregional consultations in Jamaica, within the framework of the Montevideo Consensus and the Sustainable Development Goals, which centred on population and development issues. FAO conducted a series of consultations, within which small island developing States partners and stakeholders contributed inputs to ensure that the consultative process for the formulation of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States was as inclusive as possible and that each partner could contribute to its implementation based on its comparative advantage. UNESCO considers the issues related to small island developing States to be a priority, and all their relevant internal processes have been designed to include such issues. In addition, the sustainable development of small island developing States was identified as a priority area in strategic documents approved by the UNESCO Governing Council (medium-term strategy, programme and budget, action plan, climate change strategy, etc.). Those States have been given a priority status in all the programme sectors of the Organization, wherever possible.

79. The contribution of UNIDO to shaping global discussions on small island developing States is carried out through its convening function of the various global forums under its auspices, namely, the UNIDO General Conference, the annual Ministerial Meeting of the Least Developed Countries, and the Vienna Energy Forum. The WIPO Development Agenda places emphasis on empowering and developing the capacity of the least developed countries and small island developing States to use the intellectual property system as a contributing factor in building their economies.

80. WIPO provided funding support to a number of small island developing States in the Pacific to enable their participation in its Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore. UN-Women continued to prioritize the issues and concerns of small island developing States in its thematic or regional conferences and processes while the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions included the concerns and priorities of those States in their decision-making processes.

81. The agencies members of the United Nations country team in the Pacific actively supported the substantive inclusion of the voices of Pacific nations in global debates and processes, including, among others, supporting climate-affected small island developing States in the Pacific in lead-up preparations for the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the coordination of the Pacific regional consultations for the World Humanitarian Summit, the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific and the finalization and roll-out of the Sustainable Development Goals. The team, in collaboration with the Pacific Ocean Alliance and the Pacific Islands Forum and other relevant regional organizations, also supported the small island developing States in the Pacific in the regional consultations and preparations leading up to the Ocean Conference.

82. OCHA provides support to representatives of the small island developing States in the Pacific, including national disaster managers, to attend regional and subregional meetings, events and processes. WMO considers small island developing States as one of its main priorities and integrates their interests and issues into the agenda of their organized events and conferences, when appropriate. A large percentage of new projects of WMO are either focused on those States or have a related component. IMF provides venues and opportunities, such as high-level events at its annual and spring meeting for the small island developing States to discuss the initiatives of the Fund among themselves, with the IMF management and staff and other stakeholders. The Fund also has a standing working group on small island developing States that discusses relevant policy issues and best practices across departments and maintains a small island developing States knowledge exchange website.

83. IOM conferences, meetings and processes linked to climate and the environment prominently feature the specific vulnerabilities of small island developing States. Many of the Organization's newest member States are small island developing States with a specific interest in climate vulnerabilities and migration. The Commonwealth Secretariat hosts the annual Global Biennial Conference on Small States, at which key stakeholders from its member States and beyond share good practices and discuss the priorities and plans of action of small States. The Commonwealth also has a dedicated work programme on small States in the broad areas of resilience-building, policy research, capacity-building and global advocacy.

III. Monitoring and follow-up

84. In paragraphs 122 and 123 of the Samoa Pathway, world leaders called upon the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies to monitor the full implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy and the Samoa Pathway, including through the monitoring frameworks of the regional commissions, and recalled that the Assembly and the Council, as well as the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under their auspices, would devote adequate time to the discussion of the sustainable development challenges facing small island developing States in order to enhance engagement and implement commitments. The present section provides an account of the monitoring, review and follow-up activities undertaken during the reporting period.

A. High-level political forum on sustainable development 2017

85. In response to paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 71/225, session nine of the thematic review segment of the high-level political forum in 2017 was devoted entirely to the consideration of issues related to small island developing States. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in those States, commitment is required at the highest political level, supported by broad political consultation and collaboration across traditional alignments. Transformational leadership that can strategically guide all sectors must be at the core. National mainstreaming of the Samoa Pathway and the Sustainable Development Goals, inclusive with midterm frameworks and budgets, is critical to fostering national ownership of the 2030 Agenda and ensuring positive synergies. Building capacity across all sectors, especially regarding the collection and use of data, is necessary, as is public information sharing to enhance transparency and accountability and to build trust. This was illustrated also through intervention by the Minister of Labour and Social Security of Jamaica on the "Vision 2030 Jamaica" website (www.vision2030.gov.jm/). The burden and threat of communicable and non-communicable diseases remain a serious global concern, constituting one of the major challenges for small island developing States in the twenty-first century. As an example of successful implementation of a request made under the Samoa Pathway, FAO reported at the meeting on the content of the recently launched Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States. The Programme is a framework within which small island developing States and their development partners can work to design and implement more coherent actions to promote food security and nutrition. In addition, as a collaborative initiative between small island developing States, the Government of Singapore and the Small Islands Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs co-hosted a special lunch event for small island developing States to showcase the existing regional and global support of the United Nations system in preparing for their voluntary national reviews.

B. Voluntary national reviews

86. Two small island developing States, Belize and Maldives, volunteered to undertake national reviews during the high-level political forum in 2017. Belize[20] has made significant strides in transitioning from the Millennium Development Goals. "Horizon 2030: national development framework for Belize 2010-2030" now guides long-term development planning. The strategic priorities for Belize by 2030 include democratic governance for effective public administration and sustainable development, education, economic resilience and a healthy citizenry and environment. Building on this long-term development plan and to guide the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, Belize adopted the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy 2016-2020. This is an integrated, systematic approach based on the principles of sustainable development towards a proactive role for the State, accessing global markets and innovative social policy implementation.

87. Like most small island developing States, Maldives [21] faces significant economic, social and environmental challenges. These are exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and their vulnerability to both internal and external shocks. In addition, geographic insularity, dispersed population and high transaction costs results in limited potential for economies of scale. Despite these challenges,

[20] See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=483&menu=3170.

[21] See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=374&menu=3170.

the country has made significant progress in areas of eradicating extreme poverty, achieving universal education and health care and protecting terrestrial and marine biodiversity. However, additional effort is needed in areas such as empowering women, strengthening mechanisms of governance and justice, minimizing economic disparity and sustainable consumption and production in order to ensure that no Maldivian is left behind.

C. Secretariat coordination

88. In paragraph 120 of the Samoa Pathway, world leaders requested the Secretary-General to ensure, among other things, that: (a) the Small Islands Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continues, pursuant to its support and advisory services mandate, to analyse and report on the situation of small island developing States; and (b) that the Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, pursuant to its advocacy mandate, ensures the mainstreaming of the Samoa Pathway and issues related to small island developing States into the work of the United Nations system and enhances the coherence of the issues of those States in United Nations processes, including at the national, regional and global levels, and continues to mobilize international support and resources to support the implementation of the Samoa Pathway by small island developing States.

89. Since the last reporting period, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States have taken concrete steps to institutionalize their collaboration. Regular lines of communication at the director's level have been established to ensure better coordination and planning of work in support of small island developing States. An "alternate chairing" arrangement of the meetings of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group on Small Island Developing States has been adopted and joint preparation of side events at global conferences are now regularly undertaken. This approach has proven successful, as exemplified at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, Habitat III and the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The two Units have also improved collaboration and co-financing of activities developed in support of small island developing States, such as the conference on public-private partnerships for small islands, held in Aruba in March 2017, and the Small Islands Developing States Preparatory Meeting for the Ocean Conference on Sustainable Development Goal 14. The Department and the Office continued to render joint support to the Steering Committee on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States. The issuance of joint invitations co-signed by the heads of the Department and the Office when organizing events calling for the participation of those States has improved transparency in their communication with Member States.

IV. Conclusion

90. The United Nations system and other related entities and organizations have been making progress in supporting the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and addressing the vulnerabilities of small island developing States. They have also been strengthening linkages between their global processes and the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, work still remains to be done.

91. Small island developing States are advancing their implementation plans and have been adapting the Sustainable Development Goal targets to their national development plans and policies. Those States are encouraged to undertake voluntary

national reviews as a means of assessing progress and identifying gaps in implementation. At the same time, all opportunities for synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Samoa Pathway should be exploited to derive maximum benefits in the implementation of these two agendas.

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Advancement of women

Violence against women migrant workers

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/130, outlines the current context with respect to the problem of violence against women migrant workers. It provides information on the measures taken by Member States and activities undertaken within the United Nations system to address this issue and ensure the protection of migrant women's human rights. The report concludes with recommendations for future action.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 70/130 on violence against women migrant workers, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide a comprehensive, analytical and thematic report on the implementation of the resolution at its seventy-second session, taking into account updated information from the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as the reports of special rapporteurs that refer to the situation of women migrant workers and other relevant sources, including non-governmental organizations. It called upon Governments to adopt or strengthen measures to protect the human rights of women migrant workers, regardless of immigration status, including ensuring their access to adequate
health-care services and to justice, and by addressing the underlying causes of violence against women migrant workers through education, dissemination of information and awareness-raising.

2. The present report covers the period from July 2015 to June 2017. Since the finalization of the previous report (A/70/205), Member States have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets (resolution 70/1). Goal 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and one of its targets (5.2) is to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres. Further, the Sustainable Development Goals outline 22 migration-related targets across 11 goals, including target 8.7 on ending modern slavery and human trafficking which reflects the important link between migration and trafficking, and target 8.8 on protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers, particularly women migrants and those in precarious employment. The 2030 Agenda thus provides a new impetus for action to address violence against women migrant workers.

3. The Beijing Platform for Action articulated a vision for women to live their lives free from violence. Migrant women, including women migrant workers, are noted as being particularly vulnerable to violence and other forms of abuse. It further outlined the need for States to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the most comprehensive international instrument to protect and promote the human rights of women and girls. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women introduced two general recommendations (Nos. 12 and 19) on violence against women and continues to make specific recommendations to States parties in relation to ending violence against women.

4. This present report incorporates submissions from 25 Member States[1] and five United Nations entities[2] relating to violence against women migrant workers in all public and private spheres. It draws on concluding observations, general recommendations and comments of human rights treaty bodies, and reports by

[1] Argentina, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Philippines, Poland, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Togo and Turkey.

[2] International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and World Health Organization (WHO).

special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council. Further, in recognition of the important role of non-State actors, this report also includes data and case studies from the Women in Migration Network, a civil society organization that advocates for the human rights of all migrant women and the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence.[3]

II. Context

5. In September 2016, Heads of State and Government and High Representatives adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (General Assembly resolution 71/1) during the high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. This was an unprecedented moment of international cooperation on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, and sets out a commitment to ensure a dignified and people-centred approach. The Declaration commits the international community to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, the full respect and protection of the human rights of women and girls, and the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence to the greatest extent possible. One of the key outcomes of the Declaration was the agreement to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The global compact will outline a set of principles, commitments and understandings among Member States to ensure that governance of international migration fully respects and protects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants. The global compact is a unique opportunity for Member States to bolster their commitments to incorporate a gender perspective into migration policies and strengthen national laws, institutions and programmes to eliminate sexual and gender-based violence against migrant women.

6. There is an urgent need to better respond to the gender dimensions of migration. Of the approximately 244 million migrants worldwide, an estimated 48 per cent are women.[4] In Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania[5] and North America women continue to represent approximately 50 per cent of all international migrants, whereas in Africa and Asia women represent 46.1 per cent and 42 per cent of the total number of international migrants, respectively.[6] There is limited data available for those migrant women with irregular migration status or working in unregulated or informal sectors.[7] Data on more highly-skilled documented migrant women shows that they tend to be concentrated in female-dominated occupations.[8] The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development have shown that

[3] More information about the Women in Migration Network is available from womeninmigration.org.

[4] United Nations, *International Migration Report 2015: Highlights* (ST/ESA/SER.A/375). Available from www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf.

[5] Oceania includes Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

[6] See www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimatesgraphs.shtml?5g5.

[7] ILO, *ILO Global Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology — Special Focus on Migrant Domestic Workers* (Geneva, 2015); see also http://madenetwork.org/sites/default/files/BP%204%20Rights%20of%20migrant%20women%20-%20web.pdf.

[8] IOM and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, "Harnessing knowledge on the migration of highly skilled women", 2014.

many migrant women experience de-skilling, working in sectors that do not reflect their level of education or qualifications.[9]

7. For countries of origin, transit and destination migration has the potential to foster more equitable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and human development. Migration can afford women the opportunity to overcome or leave behind persistent gender inequalities in their countries of origin and escape situations of abusive spousal relationships.[10] Migration can also foster women's empowerment and, through new opportunities and personal expansion, improve their agency and autonomy.[11] Women migrant workers make considerable contributions to countries of origin, transit and destination: in 2016 migrant women accounted for approximately half of the $601 billion sent in global remittances.[12] Owing to the demand-driven sectors in which women migrant workers are concentrated (domestic work, care services and entertainment) their remittances are more resilient to economic shocks. Research has shown that migrant women are often more likely than men to remit on a regular basis owing to women's stronger links to family members and self-insurance motives,[13] underlining the link between a woman's gendered caregiving role in the household and her increasing propensity to remit.[14] Yet the feminized, informal sectors in which many migrant women work are characterized by low wages, poor working conditions, limited labour and social protections, and exposure to physical and sexual violence. This indicates that remittances are produced at significant personal cost to women migrant workers.[15]

8. Despite the potential gains from migration, migrant women are often more vulnerable to human rights violations than men, owing to deeply entrenched gender inequalities that shape, inter alia, the informality of the sectors in which they work and restrictive immigration controls. This includes the failure of some criminal justice systems to differentiate between irregular migrants and victims of trafficking, exposing many migrant women to further violations by treating them as criminals without proper access to justice.[16] In his report to the Human Rights Council in 2015 (A/HRC/29/36), the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants recognized that irregular migration is not a crime and yet some States continue to criminalize irregular entry or stay. Such criminalization often leads to unlawful detention, and in many cases women are not detained separately from men.

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Christina E. Bejarano, *The Latino Gender Gap in U.S. Politics* (New York, Routledge, 2014); IOM, "Taking action against violence and discrimination affecting migrant women and girls", IOM factsheet. Available from http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/violence_against_women_infosheet2013.pdf.

[11] Jenna Hennebry, Keegan Williams and Margaret Walton-Roberts, *Women Working Worldwide: A Situational Analysis of Women Migrant Workers*, Research Paper (New York, UN-Women, 2016).

[12] See http://ir.westernunion.com/news/archived-press-releases/press-release-details/2016/Western-Union-Pays-Tribute-to-Global-Women-Work-Force-as-World-Economic-Change-Agents-and-Calls-for-Greater-Recognition-and-Integration/default.aspx.

[13] Maelan Le Goff, "Feminization of migration and trends in remittances", January 2016. Available from https://wol.iza.org/uploads/articles/220/pdfs/feminization-of-migration-and-trends-in-remittances.pdf?v=1.

[14] Mónika López-Anuarbe, Maria Amparo Cruz-Saco and Yongjin Park, "More than altruism: cultural norms and remittances among Hispanics in the USA", *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, vol. 17, No. 2 (May 2016).

[15] J. Hennebry, J. Holliday and M. Moniruzzaman, *At What Cost? Women Migrant Workers, Remittances and Development*, Research Paper (New York, UN-Women, 2017).

[16] Liz Hales, and Loraine Gelsthorpe, *The Criminalization of Migrant Women* (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, 2012). Also available online from www.crim.cam.ac.uk/people/academic_research/loraine_gelsthorpe/criminalreport29july12.pdf.

Mandatory detention can place migrant women in situations in which they are at greater risk of physical and sexual violence.[17]

9. Migrant women's ability to seek help or justice or to report violence is stymied by the shortage of full and reliable information that is linguistically and culturally appropriate. Migrant women who do not have legal status in countries of transit and destination may feel unsafe in accessing health care or sexual and reproductive health services, for fear of arrest and deportation.[18] This fear feeds the reluctance of migrant women to report gender-based violence or other forms of abuse to authorities.[19] As recognized by the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, there is a need for "firewalls" to separate immigration enforcement from access to public services.[20] This would go some considerable distance to ensuring that migrant women feel safe seeking support without fear of reprisal from immigration enforcement authorities.

10. Along their migration journey, women and girls face a heightened risk of abuse, extortion and sexual and gender-based violence, particularly at border crossings.[21] For many migrant women, the lack of information about the dangers of migrating continues to be a concern.[22] Despite being aware of the potential dangers of migrating, some women are so desperate to escape violence, abuse or gender inequality[23] that they take these risks in the hope of building better lives for themselves and/or their families. Research has shown that many smugglers use exploitative pay-as-you-go systems of payment that create debt bondage which in turn increases migrant women's vulnerability.[24]

11. In 2016, IOM reported that 7,872 people were recorded as dead or missing during migration.[25] Despite the challenges in data collection, IOM gathers sex-disaggregated data at the regional level for those reported as dead or missing along specific migration routes. Evidence has shown that during migrant sea crossings women and girls are at a greater risk of drowning as they are less likely than men or boys to be able to swim, their clothes may impede their movement, and they often succumb to hyperthermia sooner than men.[26]

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[17] United Nations, "UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants concludes his follow up country visit to Greece", 16 May 2016. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19972&LangID=E#sthash.SFVGeldc.dpuf.

[18] United Nations, "Behind closed doors: protecting and promoting the human rights of migrant domestic workers in an irregular situation", 2015.

[19] Alexis A. Arowitz, *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The Global Trade in Human Beings* (Westport, Connecticut, Praeger Publishers, 2009).

[20] Statement available from www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16886&LangID=E.

[21] United Nations Children's Fund, "A deadly journey for children: the Central Mediterranean migration route", February 2017. Available from www.unicef.de/blob/135970/6178f12582223da6980ee1974a772c14/a-deadl-journey-for-children---unicef-report-data.pdf.

[22] Mary Kawar, "Gender and migration: why are women more vulnerable?", in *Femmes en Mouvement: genre, migrations et nouvelle division internationale du travail*, Fenneke Reysoo and Christine Verschuur, eds. (Geneva, Graduate Institute Publications, 2016).

[23] Jonathan T. Hiskey and others, "Understanding the Central American refugee crisis: why they are fleeing and how U.S. policies are failing to deter them", 2016. Available from www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/understanding_the_central_american_refugee_crisis.pdf.

[24] Kristy Siegfried, "On the trail of migrant smugglers", 7 January 2014. Available fromwww.irinnews.org/analysis/2014/01/07/trail-migrant-smugglers.

[25] See https://missingmigrants.iom.int/latest-global-figures (accessed 30 May 2017).

[26] Jane Freedman, Zeynep Kivilcim and Nurcan Özgür Baklacıoğlu, eds., *A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (Abingdon, United Kingdom, Routledge, 2017).

12. Migrant women and girls without the means to access regular migration routes, particularly those relying on smuggling networks, are also at a heightened risk of sexual abuse. Many criminal gangs preying on migrant women and girls use sexual violence as part of the "price" they demand of migrants.[27] Women migrating through irregular or dangerous migration routes reported to IOM that they prepared for the risk of sexual attacks en route by purchasing emergency contraception or taking contraceptive injections ahead of the journey.[28] Unchecked sexual violence against women on the move is at risk of becoming normalized.

13. Migrant girls are particularly vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation, particularly if travelling alone.[29] Save the Children examined the link between the migration of unaccompanied minors and the risk of their becoming victims of trafficking. A strong correlation was found between unaccompanied child migration and sexual exploitation, forced labour and begging.[30] According to figures obtained by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), approximately 92 per cent of migrant children arriving in Italy in 2016 were unaccompanied.[31] Migrant adolescents and girls are also particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation given that their perceived innocence, virginity and assumed low risk of sexually transmitted diseases are considered valuable by perpetrators.[32]

14. There continues to be an increasing demand for migrant women to fill labour deficits in countries of destination, particularly in the domestic and care sectors. The failure of States to recognize and value unpaid care work has perpetuated the demand for women migrant care workers to fill care deficits.[33] Migrant women who fill these care gaps in countries of destination often rely on female relatives to care for their own families in the countries of origin, creating a chain effect referred to as global care chains.[34] The clustering in care and domestic work in destination countries of low-income migrant women, many of whom are also ethnic minorities, perpetuates labour segregation and class and racial inequalities.[35]

15. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights highlighted that migrant women are often restricted to gendered and informal occupations, such as care and domestic work, where legal protection of their labour rights is limited, heightening the risk of exploitation (see A/HRC/33/67). ILO estimates that, of the 11.5 million migrant domestic workers worldwide, 73.4 per cent are women, most of whom work in private homes. The location of domestic work in the private sphere often leads to the perception that it is unskilled work, of low value and

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[27] Amnesty International, "Invisible victims: migrants on the move in Mexico", April 2010. Available from www.amnestyusa.org/files/amr410142010eng.pdf.

[28] IOM, Key informant interviews on women and children migrants in Libya conducted in Tunis, 26 and 27 September 2016.

[29] United Nations Support Mission in Libya and OHCHR, "Detained and dehumanised", report on human rights abuses against migrants in Libya, 13 December 2016. Available from www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/LY/DetainedAndDehumanised_en.pdf.

[30] Save the Children, "Young invisible enslaved: the child victims at the heart of trafficking and exploitation in Italy", 2016.

[31] UNICEF press release, 17 May 2017. Available from www.unicef.org/media/media_95997.html.

[32] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Sexual and gender-based violence against refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons: guidelines for prevention and response", May 2003. Available from www.unhcr.org/3f696bcc4.pdf.

[33] Sarah Gammage and Natacha Stevanovich, "Gender, migration, work and care deficits: what role is there for the SDGs?", background paper prepared for the Expert Group Meeting on women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work, Geneva, September 2016.

[34] Tam O'Neill, Anjali Fleury and Marta Foresti, "Women on the move: migration, gender equality and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", July 2016. Available from www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10731.pdf.

[35] World Bank, "Gender differences in employment and why they matter", in *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development* (Washington D.C., 2011).

falling outside of normal labour protections. Migrant domestic workers are often exposed to physical, psychological and sexual violence, including retaliatory punishment from employers for small "errors" in their work.[36] In its general comment No. 1, on migrant domestic workers, the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families highlighted the increased risks faced by women migrant domestic workers, including from gender-based violence, adding that these risks are exacerbated for women with irregular migration status.

16. It is within the commercial sex industry that the intersection between migration and trafficking is most pronounced. Many cases of trafficking start with migrant women who unwittingly utilize the services of traffickers posing as smugglers. On arrival, traffickers leverage the fear of deportation to place these migrant women in exploitative situations.[37] Research conducted with women in the sex industry in Mexico found that the economic vulnerabilities of irregular migration contributed to women being forced to exchange sex for room and board.[38]

17. Women migrant workers may be disproportionately vulnerable to abuse and violence at all stages of migration, based on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. This includes the specific discrimination faced by migrant women with disabilities who may encounter structural, physical and attitudinal barriers, as recognized by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its general recommendation No. 18. Migrant women may face discrimination based on other identities including their race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, age, class, caste, being lesbian, bisexual or transgender. All of which are recognized in the Committee's general recommendation No. 32 as compounding the discrimination already faced by women.

18. Transgender migrant women are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and gender-based violence in countries of origin and destination. A recent study conducted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees highlighted the constant discrimination, harassment, and threat of violence faced by transgender women, many of whom migrate after being shunned by friends and family members in their countries of origin. In both countries of transit and countries of destination, the gender identity of transgender migrant women further exacerbates the level of violence and abuse they experience. Pervasive cultural stigma and discrimination affect their ability to access the legal employment market, and many have no alternative but to work in the commercial sex industry in countries of destination.[39]

19. The multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by migrant women have specific meaning for indigenous migrant women. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in his report to the General Assembly (A/HRC/35/42), noted his concern about the ongoing levels of discrimination, violence and threat faced by indigenous people. Indigenous women reportedly face disproportionately high rates of domestic violence and sexual abuse, exacerbated for indigenous migrant women, who often find it more difficult to access their rights in countries of destination.

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[36] United Nations, "Behind closed doors: protecting and promoting the human rights of migrant domestic workers in an irregular situation", 2015.

[37] *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.6).

[38] Shira M. Goldenberg and others, "Exploring the context of trafficking and adolescent sex industry involvement in Tijuana, Mexico: consequences for HIV risk and prevention", *Violence against Women*, vol. 21, No. 4 (April 2015).

[39] UNHCR, "Women on the run: first-hand accounts of refugees fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico", October 2015. Available from www.unhcr.org/5630f24c6.html.

20. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance also reported that political parties with anti-immigrant and anti-minority agendas play a significant role in fostering fears among populations against people of a certain religious or cultural background (see A/HRC/32/50). This places migrant women at particular risk as they are often held up as being symbolic bearers of caste, ethnic or cultural identity.[40] In a study conducted by the European Centre against Racism and Intolerance in 2016, Muslim women wearing visible religious symbols, such as the headscarf, were found to be particularly vulnerable to discrimination owing to the intersectionality of gender and religion.[41] This discrimination may be further heightened for migrant women.

III. Global legal and policy development and intergovernmental meetings

21. Legal, policy and normative development continued through conventions, resolutions and recommendations adopted by United Nations intergovernmental and expert bodies. Following the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to address large movements of migrants and refugees, held on 19 September 2016, a process of intergovernmental negotiations leading to the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration was launched. In support of this process, UN-Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), along with experts from relevant treaty bodies, United Nations agencies and civil society organizations, developed a set of expert recommendations to address women's human rights in the global compact, including concrete recommendations for ending all forms of violence against women migrant workers (see recommendations 3.9, 3.16, 5.2).[42]

22. The agreed conclusions adopted at the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women on women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work (see E/2017/27) raised concerns regarding the vulnerability to abuse and exploitation of women migrant workers, particularly in the informal economy. The Commission reiterated that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development needs to be implemented in a comprehensive manner. The agreed conclusions highlight the role of men and boys as allies in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, and the Commission also recognized that women's economic autonomy can expand their options for leaving abusive relationships. It called for States to strengthen and enforce laws and policies to eliminate all forms of violence and harassment against all women in the world of work, underscoring that violence against women and girls is an obstacle to gender equality and women's economic empowerment. The implementation and achievement of target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals will ensure that States respond to the calls made in the agreed conclusions, and finally eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in both the private and the public sphere.

23. The Global Forum on Migration and Development continued to address the gendered dimensions of migration. At the 2016 Summit, the Chair of the Civil

[40] Charlotte Lindsey, "Women in war", International Committee of the Red Cross study on the impact of armed conflict on women, 2001. Available from www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0798_women_facing_war.pdf.

[41] European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, "Annual report on ECRI's activities", June 2017. Available from www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/Annual_Reports/Annual%20report%202016.pdf.

[42] Available from www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/3/addressing-womens-rights-in-global-compact-for-migration.

Society Days underscored that migrant women are not vulnerable populations in need of rescue. He added that restrictive immigration policies place women in situations of vulnerability by driving them to use irregular and often more dangerous migratory routes.[43]

24. During the fortieth annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, the Ministers reaffirmed the need to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, especially those of women and girls, irrespective of their migration status. In the Ministerial Declaration it was recognized that violence and discrimination against women and girls continue to be obstacles to the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, and development (see A/71/422, annex, paras. 72 and 84).

25. At its sixty-ninth session, the World Health Assembly welcomed the launch by the United Nations Secretary-General of the new Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016-2030). The Global Strategy seeks to expand enabling environments for all women and girls. It outlines the need to eliminate all harmful practices, discrimination, and physical and sexual violence carried out against them, while recognizing the marginalization faced by women and girls based on intersecting forms of discrimination including migration status.[44]

26. General Assembly resolution 71/237, on international migration and development, underscores Member States' commitments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (resolution 69/313) to ensure women's equal participation in the economy and to eliminate all gender-based violence and discrimination. It further emphasizes the need for States to protect women migrant workers in all sectors, including those involved in domestic work.

27. Since the finalization of the previous report, the Human Rights Council has adopted several resolutions addressing the issue of violence against women.[45] In the resolutions, the Council recognized the need to strengthen national laws, institutions and programmes to combat gender-based violence including trafficking in persons, further adding that all violence against women and girls is a form of discrimination that violates their full enjoyment of human rights.

28. The human rights treaty bodies continued to take up the situation of violence against women, including women migrant workers. Article 11 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women addresses the obligations of States to eliminate discrimination against women in employment. General recommendation No. 26, on women migrant workers, of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women highlights that women migrant workers are more vulnerable to sexual abuse, sexual harassment and physical violence. In general recommendation No. 34, on the rights of rural women, it is noted that women and girls from rural communities are at special risk of violence, sexual exploitation and harassment when they leave rural communities and migrate internally to seek employment in urban areas.

IV. Measures reported by Member States

29. In their contributions to the present report, Member States highlighted a range of measures taken to combat violence and discrimination against women migrant

[43] The full text of the Chair's report is available from https://gfmd.org/docs/bangladesh-2016.

[44] WHO, "The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016-2030)", 2015. Available from www.who.int/life-course/partners/global-strategy/ewec-globalstrategyreport-200915.pdf?ua=1.

[45] For example, resolutions 29/14, 32/14 and 35/10.

workers. States also provided some information on anti-trafficking policies, highlighting the important, but often ambiguous, links between violence against women migrant workers and trafficking.[46]

A. International instruments

30. Since the previous report of the Secretary-General the number of States parties to international instruments relevant to tackling violence and discrimination against women migrant workers has marginally increased.[47]

Treaty	*Number of ratifications, 2015*	*Number of ratifications, 2017*
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	48	51
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	185	187
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	167	170
Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	141	143

31. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, has been ratified by all 25 reporting States. China and Jordan have acceded to it and Japan is a signatory.

32. The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air has been ratified by Argentina, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Mozambique, the Philippines, Poland, the Russian Federation and Turkey. Japan and Sri Lanka are both signatories.

33. Several States contributing to the present report are parties to relevant ILO conventions. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cyprus, Ecuador, Italy, Jamaica and the Philippines are parties to the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97); Argentina, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, the Philippines, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Togo and Turkey are parties to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cyprus, Italy and the Philippines are parties to the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143); and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Japan and Poland are parties to the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181).

34. On 5 September 2013, the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) came into force. As at 1 June 2017, 24 countries had ratified the Convention (up from 21 in 2015), including Argentina, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic,

[46] Reports of the Secretary-General on trafficking in women and girls have been submitted to the General Assembly every two years, most recently at its seventy-first session (see A/71/223).

[47] All information on United Nations treaty ratification is available from https://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx?clang=_en.

Ecuador, Italy and the Philippines of the reporting States. The Convention will enter into force for Jamaica on 11 October 2017.

35. Adherence to regional instruments tackling violence against women can also contribute to addressing violence against women migrant workers. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Poland and Turkey have ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention); Cyprus and Greece are both signatories. In June 2017, the European Commissioner for Justice and Gender Equality signed the Istanbul Convention thereby paving the way for the European Union's accession to the Convention upon ratification by the European Council.[48] Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines continue working with other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to conclude an instrument on implementing the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.[49]

B. Legislation

36. Legal frameworks adopted by States seek to protect migrant women in regular and irregular situations, including those in formal or informal employment. Measures that can provide protection to women migrant workers can be found in different sections of national legislation, including legislation responding to violence against women, employment conditions, labour rights, immigration laws, and specific legislation that governs the protection of migrants and the prevention of trafficking.

37. Several States (Argentina, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Jordan, Mozambique, Nepal, Russian Federation, Togo) have provisions within their constitutional framework or national legislation to ensure that women and men are treated as equal before the law. In Jamaica, Jordan and Mozambique these laws cover all persons working or living within their territories regardless of nationality. Bosnia and Herzegovina has a national law on gender equality which forbids discrimination on the grounds of gender, and harmonized both the Law on Foreigners and the Law on Asylum with the Law on Gender Equality. Indonesia is currently drafting an amendment to the Law on the Placement and the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers to harmonize it with the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

38. Specific provisions within the Penal Codes of several reporting States (Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Greece, Japan, Poland, Turkey) address violence against women, without specifying migration status. The Penal Codes of Costa Rica, Japan and Poland provide equal access to assistance and protection to all victims of violence regardless of migration status.

39. In line with international labour and human rights standards, some States reported having specific measures in place to protect women migrant workers against discrimination, exploitation and violence. Greece, under its law on the return of third-country nationals, prohibits the involuntary return of migrant women who are pregnant or within six months of giving birth. Australia, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Japan, Mexico and Togo have specific labour legislation to ensure that migrant workers receive the same level of protection from exploitation and access to the

[48] See www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/05/11-violence-against-women/ (last accessed on 1 June 2017).

[49] See http://asean.org/asean-continues-to-protect-and-promote-the-rights-of-migrant-workers/.

same conditions of employment as nationals. Ecuador, Greece, Jamaica and Poland provide access to social protection schemes to those migrant workers with the legal right to work. The Russian Federation reported that its social care system supports all those in need, including women migrant workers, noting that all foreign citizens residing in the Russian Federation are entitled to medical care free of charge. Mexico aims to reduce the vulnerability of migrant women to spousal violence through the provision of its Migration Law which ensures that migrant women are provided with migration status independent of that of their spouse, ending the use of the immigration category "economic dependent".

40. Regulation of recruitment processes can prevent the exploitation of women migrant workers and protect them from abuse. Sri Lanka reported an amendment to the Penal Code providing increased powers to arrest illegal recruiters, without the need for a court order. In Nepal, Foreign Employment Regulation 2008 ensures that for every 1,000 Nepalese women migrant workers there will be one woman labour attaché appointed to help improve safe labour migration and reporting mechanisms. Cambodia implemented a decree placing greater responsibility on the role of recruitment agents in the protection of migrant workers, including ensuring that all recruited workers are enrolled in the social security programme, and recruitment agents must ensure that the migrant is returned safely to his or her country of origin at the end of the employment contract. Jordan strengthened legislation on the protection of domestic workers, including obligatory health and work insurance for migrant workers to be provided by recruitment offices and the removal of restrictions on the freedom of migrant women to refuse or change employer in the case of exploitation or violation of human rights. Regular inspections conducted by the Ministry in conjunction with the national police departments led to the closure of nine recruitment agencies and the withdrawal of 19 licences in 2016.

C. Policies

41. The commitment to protect women migrant workers was incorporated by several States (Argentina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Turkey) into national action plans on migration. These plans outline a gender-sensitive approach to migration governance, prioritizing the elimination of violence against women. Nepal reported on the implementation of an action plan on gender empowerment and the elimination of gender-based violence as a framework for national policies. Argentina identified the eradication of violence against all women as a national policy priority.

42. Several States reported increased protections for women migrant domestic workers. Cyprus aims to reduce migrant domestic workers' vulnerability by providing the option to change employers should there be a breach of contract. Costa Rica, Jordan and Nepal have strengthened the working conditions for domestic workers including their legal entitlement to standardized work hours, weekly time off and, in the case of Costa Rica, an annual holiday entitlement. The Russian Federation reported that all employment contracts must stipulate working hours, terms of payment and the designated number of days off.

43. Improved access to justice for women migrant workers has been reported by Costa Rica, Ecuador, Indonesia and Nepal, with Costa Rica and Ecuador highlighting the need for improvements for women with irregular migration status. In Ecuador, the Judicial Council developed policies to combat gender-based violence, maltreatment and sexual exploitation of women regardless of their migration status and to help overcome institutional barriers. Nepal established the Foreign Employment Tribunal to facilitate access to justice for migrant workers who are victims of exploitation.

D. Data collection and research

44. While the lack of data on violence against women migrant workers remains a concern, some States have collected data on labour and migration and on the incidence of violence against women, including women migrant workers. Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka reported having collected sex-disaggregated data on migration and labour, while Costa Rica and Italy reported having data on violence against women disaggregated by migration status. Cambodia collects sex- and sector-disaggregated data on Cambodian workers migrating internationally through regular channels.

45. Ecuador, Greece, Italy and Turkey reported the adoption of new approaches to data collection with the aim of increasing information on women migrant workers. For example, Ecuador developed an online system to register new migrants and immediate members of their family, which includes information about key demographics.

46. The Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Italy, Jamaica, Mozambique and Sri Lanka reported gathering data on violence and discrimination carried out against women, including women migrant workers. Costa Rica collected data on the number of migrant women using women's shelters, the number of victims of trafficking disaggregated by sex, and the number of femicides reported.

E. Preventive measures, training and capacity-building

47. Prevention strategies, such as educating policy makers and the public, providing capacity-building to migrants and training for public officials, and strengthening labour inspections are all central to eliminating violence against women migrant workers. Several States (Australia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Togo) referred to specific measures in place to prevent violence against women migrant workers. Turkey reported undertaking an awareness-raising campaign entitled "Here I am to end violence against women", with banners at sports games and advertisements on television. Japan and Poland reported on the provision of specific support for civil society organizations working to reduce the exploitation and abuse of women migrant workers.

48. Many States reported investing in capacity-building for women migrant workers on employment rights and standard working conditions, and training on violence and legal protections. Australia, Costa Rica, Mexico and the Philippines have integrated information programmes and pre-departure training into the recruitment of migrant workers, specifically migrant domestic workers. The Philippines reported on a comprehensive, country-specific pre-departure training programme for migrant domestic workers which includes language classes, stress management and modules on employment contracts and financial literacy.

49. Australia, Italy and Sri Lanka reported that they were developing specific training programmes for employers, employment agencies and intermediaries on the rights of women migrant workers to eliminate and prevent discrimination and violence. In Australia the Migrant Workers' Taskforce examines the labour hiring practices of companies that employ migrant workers to identify persistent cases of exploitation and underpayment, particularly of vulnerable groups or in specific sectors.

50. Several States (Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Ecuador, Greece, Jamaica, Jordan, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Turkey) reported conducting

training programmes for public officials, including the judiciary, police, immigration officials and civil servants. Such training sought to improve mechanisms for identifying women migrant workers at risk of violence and increase protection from exploitation and abuse.

F. Protection and assistance

51. Migrant women who are survivors of violence need a range of services to help them recover from their trauma and protect against future violations. Several States (Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Turkey) reported on the availability of services and mechanisms to protect women survivors of violence and trafficking. This included ensuring that information services are more accessible, through the provision of multilingual hotlines and providing information on shelters, safe houses, legal aid, health and counselling services. Italy reported offering six-month residence permits for women migrant workers who file a complaint against their employer, including accusations of violence or abuse.

G. Bilateral, regional, international and other cooperation

52. Several States (Cambodia, Indonesia, Jamaica, Nepal, Philippines, Togo) reported having bilateral agreements on labour migration. The Philippines noted the role of bilateral agreements in ensuring standardized contracts of employment in countries of destination. Indonesia holds 13 bilateral agreements related to the protection and placement of migrant workers in both the formal and informal economies. Togo has a formal arrangement in place with France to protect the social security rights of nationals, including women workers, in their respective countries.

53. Multilateral cooperation was reported by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Jamaica, the Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, Togo and Turkey. The regional mechanisms included the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Caribbean Community and Common Market, the Common Market of the South, the Economic Community of West African States, the Colombo Process, and the Organization for American States. Sri Lanka signed memorandums of understanding and bilateral agreements with several countries of destination in the Gulf to protect the rights and welfare of women migrant workers. In the ASEAN region, Indonesia highlighted the importance of implementing legally binding instruments that protect both documented and undocumented workers and their families. Jordan worked closely with the European Union and IOM on workshops and training courses to improve Jordan's victim protection services for migrants, with a focus on women migrant workers.

V. Initiatives of United Nations and related entities in support of national efforts

A. Research and data collection

54. Entities of the United Nations system continued to support the increased collection, analysis and availability of data on migrant women and children, including on violence against them. In its work with Member States, the World Health Organization developed a Global Plan of Action on Violence against Women and Girls, to support States in generating evidence on the magnitude and consequences of violence against women, including migrant women and girls.

Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 29/2, OHCHR prepared a study on the situation of migrants in transit, including women and girls, which was presented to the Council in March 2016 (A/HRC/31/35). IOM conducted a study on the health effects of labour exploitation and trafficking of women and men.[50] The United Nations trust fund in support of actions to end violence against women supported a project based in Guatemala which created a mechanism to register cases of violence against women in the sex industry, who were mostly young indigenous migrant women.[51] The project worked with 2,165 women in the sex industry, 73 of whom identified as indigenous migrant women. The project provided a broader evidence base for a referral system and increased access to health, legal and social services for survivors of violence.

B. Support for legislative and policy development

55. Entities of the United Nations system continued to collaborate with national authorities to ensure that laws cohere to protect, assist and prevent violence against women migrant workers. ILO and UN-Women supported and encouraged the ratification of ILO Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No. 201 concerning decent work for domestic workers. UN-Women and OHCHR in conjunction with other United Nations entities, treaty bodies and civil society organizations developed a set of expert recommendations to address women's human rights in the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Those recommendations, which have been endorsed by the Committee on Migrant Workers and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, seek to support States in developing human rights-based and gender-responsive migration policies, particularly in the preparatory phases of the global compact on migration, providing specific references for women to live free of all forms of violence.

56. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women provided concluding observations to several States (Canada, Japan, Jordan, Philippines) on addressing violence against women migrant workers. The Committee recommended that States increase the availability of sex-disaggregated labour data, particularly relating to indigenous and minority women, as well as women with disabilities and migrant women.

C. Advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity-building

57. Entities of the United Nations system continued to support advocacy, awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts to prevent violence against women migrant workers. During the tenure of UN-Women as Chair of the Global Migration Group in 2016, the specific needs and vulnerabilities of migrant women — including their increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence — were highlighted and incorporated into the work and output of the group. Further, the Global Migration Group, led by OHCHR, developed a set of principles and guidelines on the human rights protection of migrants in vulnerable situations within large and/or mixed movements,[52] including a focus on migrant women and girls, with specific measures to reduce sexual and gender-based violence. These will be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh session in March

[50] Available from https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/labour_exploitation_trafficking_en.pdf.

[51] For information on the project see the 2015 annual report of the United Nations trust fund to end violence against women. Available from http://untf.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/06/annual-report-2015.

[52] Available from www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/PrinciplesAndGuidelines.pdf.

2018. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment recognized the importance of strengthening mechanisms for protecting women in the labour market. This included addressing sexual violence and harassment in the workplace as well as the need for States to continue signing and ratifying the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189) to improve the protection of women migrant domestic workers.[53]

58. The UN-Women programme on promoting and protecting the labour and human rights of women migrant workers supported capacity-building of Governments, migrant women and their organizations in three pilot countries, Mexico, the Philippines and the Republic of Moldova. UN-Women, in partnership with IOM, promoted the campaign "I am a Migrant" which sought to break down negative stereotypes and raise awareness of migrants' experiences across Mexico. In Moldova, an awareness-raising campaign, entitled "It is worth seeing migrant women through other eyes", sought to inform the public about women migrant workers and their true contribution to local development, while working to reduce stigma. In 2015, OHCHR produced a short documentary film entitled "I am not here" portraying the life of an undocumented migrant domestic worker as seen through the eyes of three women migrant workers.[54]

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

59. States have continued to take action at national, regional and global levels to combat violence against women migrant workers, promote their labour and human rights, and end gender-specific discrimination in migration policies. Although several States reported developing new approaches to data collection on incidences of violence against women and on migration and labour statistics, there continue to be persistent gaps in sex-disaggregated data on the experiences of violence against women migrant workers. This is especially challenging because of the number of migrant women working in informal and unregulated sectors.

60. Despite the potential for migration to promote women's agency and economic empowerment, restrictive immigration laws and a lack of regular channels for labour migration can increase the risk to women migrant workers of violence and exploitation, particularly for those women using irregular migration routes or the services of unscrupulous recruitment agents or smugglers. The risks of exploitation or abuse for women migrant workers are exacerbated by persistent gender inequalities, and heightened further still for those migrant women experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

61. States have taken steps to improve migrant women's access to justice, including greater awareness-raising among public officials and training programmes to support the judiciary, as well as specific campaigns to strengthen the capacity of women migrant workers to understand their legal entitlement to labour and human rights.

62. Despite many States reporting improved access to justice for migrant women, irregular migration status and the threat of imprisonment and/or

[53] See http://hlp-wee.unwomen.org/-/media/hlp%20wee/attachments/reports-toolkits/hlp-wee-report-2017-03-taking-action-en.pdf.

[54] Available from www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1GY6ltQVaM.

deportation continue to exacerbate the vulnerability of migrant women to sexual and gender-based violence. The failure of some States' criminal justice systems to adequately differentiate between irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking continues to be problematic as victims of abuse or exploitation become recorded, instead, as criminals.

63. In this context, the commitments by States to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and support migrant women and girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants are particularly significant. The global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration presents States with a unique opportunity to develop international migration governance that works for women. This will involve the protection of migrant women and girls against violence and exploitation at all stages of migration, while promoting their agency and leadership.

Recommendations

64. States are encouraged to implement the recommendations outlined below in order to eliminate violence and discrimination against women migrant workers and enhance their access to justice, public services, decent work and social protection:

(a) Ensure the realization of women migrant workers' human rights in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(b) Take measures to achieve all targets of the Sustainable Development Goals relating to women migrant workers, in particular target 5.2 on the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, and report on progress in implementation;

(c) Align national migration legislation to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and general recommendation No. 26 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to ensure full and comprehensive protections for all migrant women, including women migrant workers;

(d) Ensure that the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration promotes gender equality and the empowerment of all migrant women and girls, and tackles all forms of violence perpetrated against them;

(e) Ratify and implement international instruments relevant to tackling violence and discrimination against women migrant workers without delay;

(f) Ratify and implement international labour standards, in particular the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and the associated Recommendation (No. 201), so that domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers, have access to decent work and protection against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence;

(g) Eliminate all migration policies that discriminate against women and girls and ensure that national migration policies are gender-responsive and address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women migrant workers including on grounds such as age, race, ethnicity, disability, indigenous status, or being lesbian, bisexual or transgender;

(h) Eliminate gender-based discrimination, xenophobia and stigma against women migrant workers through increased awareness-raising about the positive contributions of women migrant workers, and provide capacity-

building to public officials on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of migrant women;

(i) Address all gender inequalities in the labour market which may be drivers of women's migration, by increasing the availability of decent work for women;

(j) Improve working conditions in the informal, unregulated sectors in which many women are concentrated — particularly domestic and care work — to enhance their economic empowerment;

(k) Ensure that migrant women and girls have access to all public services regardless of migration status, including health, in particular sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, education and access to justice, with information provided in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner; and separate immigration enforcement from access to public services through the implementation of "firewalls";

(l) Establish accessible and confidential gender-based violence prevention and protection services, which are linguistically and culturally appropriate, and include provision of information on the rights of women migrant workers, hotlines, dispute resolution mechanisms, legal aid, psychological support and trauma counselling; sexual and reproductive health and social services, women-only spaces, and access to women's shelters;

(m) Improve the collection and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data, including on migrant fatalities and missing persons during transit and at international borders, and conduct gender-responsive research and analysis on the experiences and realities of migrant women, including cases of violence against migrant women and violations of their rights.

65. The United Nations system is encouraged to support Member States in the implementation of measures at all levels, and to strengthen partnerships with all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, cooperatives and unions that support women migrant workers. The United Nations system should further strengthen inter-agency collaboration in order to better support women migrant workers, including through the inter-agency Global Migration Group.

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Agricultural technology for sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

A broad portfolio of policies, approaches and inputs is necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. The application of science and technology in developing sustainable agricultural practices can play an important role in providing solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Such solutions will support smallholder and family farmers in their efforts to sustainably increase productivity and incomes, contribute to the creation of sustainable food production systems, and synergize the achievement of other goals and targets in a holistic and transformative way.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 70/198, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit, at its seventy-second session, a report on the implementation of that resolution.

2. In its resolution 70/1, the Assembly emphasised the need for more holistic development and attention to interlinkages among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, noting that the challenges and commitments identified were interrelated and called for integrated solutions and that to address them effectively a new approach was needed. The transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is rooted in previous calls by policymakers and practitioners to break down the silos that have hampered development efforts in the past.

3. The present report presents a review of key challenges pertaining to sustainable agricultural development, provides examples of trends in sustainable agricultural technologies that tackle a broader set of issues than those reflected under Sustainable Development Goal 2 and makes recommendations for the way forward.

II. Overview

4. Agriculture is at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals and key to achieving them. Sustainable Development Goal 2 indirectly impacts all other Goals, emphasizing the need to pay attention across all the Goals to promote synergies while minimizing negative feedbacks. Agricultural technologies can address a host of sustainable development challenges and are recognised as having an important role in the successful implementation of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see General Assembly resolution 70/198).

5. Farmers are by far the largest source of investment in agriculture in low-income and middle-income countries.[1] Small family farms are central to rural growth and contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 2, as well as other Goals. However, long-standing barriers, such as inadequate access to natural resources, inputs, technology, finance, markets and other resources and services hinder their participation in food systems and value chains. As a result, small family farms which account for 80 per cent of the food produced in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa continue to be, paradoxically, among the poorest, most vulnerable and most food-insecure people in the world. Technological, social, economic and institutional innovations that build on the knowledge and capacities and respond to the needs and realities of family farmers, small-scale producers and rural indigenous populations can help them surpass some of these barriers, sustainably improve livelihoods and overcome the vicious cycle of poverty, vulnerability, food and nutrition insecurity and natural resource-based degradation that they usually face.[2] Agricultural technologies — encompassing crops, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry — have improved the productivity of agriculture and enhanced the sustainability and resilience of food

[1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *The State of Food Agriculture: Innovation in Family Farming* (Rome, 2014).

[2] International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *Rural Development Report 2016: Fostering Inclusive Rural Transformation* (Rome, 2016).

production systems at the local level.[3] If widely adopted, such technologies can play a critical role in securing global food supplies over the long term.

6. Sustainability requires ensuring that appropriate agricultural technologies are embedded into entire value chains based on a food systems perspective rather than isolated aspects of production. This approach allows us to address the immediate barriers facing small-scale farmers and consider linkages arising from growing pressure on natural resources. Furthermore, it allows us to monitor and benefit from synergies across all the Sustainable Development Goals.[4]

7. What is needed are policy changes, multi-stakeholder engagement and increased responsible investments in agriculture and food systems covering all aspects of the food production system: research and development in agricultural technologies, adaptation of existing technologies to local contexts and support for dissemination and adoption efforts. We need to move beyond a singular and linear approach of research-extension-farmers to embrace the entire agricultural innovation system and address complex agricultural problems in order to achieve increases in productivity and measure the sustainability of an intervention by its holistic impact. This requires embracing complexity and factoring in multidimensional outcomes as we move along the system from production to consumption.[5]

8. It is through holistic approaches that development efforts can accelerate a crucial transformation from household to institutional levels.

III. Challenges

9. Among the major trends that have profound implications for policymakers and practitioners in terms of agriculture are changing farm demographics, the pressure to simultaneously raise agricultural productivity and rebuild the resource base and the increasing vulnerability of food systems. These trends call for renewed emphasis on the role of agricultural technologies, not only to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 but also to overcome a host of development challenges linked to the attainment and visions of the 2030 Agenda.

A. Changing farm demographics

10. Demographic forces are changing the structure of farmlands, with contrasting trends. On the one hand, the percentage of people living in rural areas across the world is declining.[6] The absolute number of rural dwellers across much of East Asia, South-East Asia and Latin America is falling and in the Middle East and North Africa it is growing ever more slowly. On the other hand, in sub-Saharan Africa and countries such as India, rural populations are still increasing despite high levels of urbanization, with consequences for the average size of farms. Data from 167 countries provides compelling evidence of decreasing farm size in most low-

[3] Mark W. Rosegrant and others, *Food Security in a World of Natural Resource Scarcity: The Role of Agricultural Technologies* (Washington, D.C., International Food Policy Research Institute, 2014).

[4] Birgit Kopainsky, Theresa Tribaldos and Samuel T. Ledermann, "A food systems perspective for food and nutrition security beyond the post-2015 development agenda", *Systems Research and Behavioral Science* (April 2017).

[5] Tools such as the iSDG are supporting these efforts in several developing countries.

[6] United Nations, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision*, ST/ESA/SER.A/366 (New York, 2014).

income and middle-income countries.[7] At the same time, Africa is becoming increasingly urban; without improving access to education, health care, transportation, the Internet and stronger livelihoods in rural areas, over 50 per cent of the African population is projected to live in cities by 2050.

11. Increased migration by male jobseekers is accelerating the feminization of farming in many low-income countries.[8] As women often face additional barriers to participating in markets and value chains, such as unequal access to land, credit and education, the result is that female-headed households in rural areas are increasingly disadvantaged yet less able to rise out of poverty.[9]

12. Rural populations are also confronted with the prospect of rising dependency ratios. This demographic trend is especially prominent in Africa, home to the youngest population in the world. Young people account for 60 per cent of all unemployment on the continent, resulting in increased migration to urban areas in search of job opportunities.[10] Overall, trends in urbanization compounded by lack of productive assets for young people suggest that rural populations are ageing faster than their urban counterparts.

13. Policies and cultural norms related to land ownership and intergenerational transfer are often counterproductive to improving and promoting the engagement of women and youth in agriculture.[11] Female farmers lack equal rights to own land in more than 90 countries.

14. Urbanization will also profoundly affect land use. Global urbanization trends will result in the loss of millions of hectares of farmland by 2030, mostly in Asia and Africa.[12]

B. Increasing agricultural productivity and enhancing the resource base

15. Since the 1970s, growth rates in annual crop yields have slowed considerably. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), annual yield growth hovers between 1 and 2 per cent for most of the world's major food crops. Continued existence of major variations in productivity across regions, including persistently large potential yield gaps in sub-Saharan Africa, signal a need for novel approaches to sustainably increase production. As of 2017, existing high-input, resource-intensive farming systems, which have caused massive deforestation, water scarcities, soil depletion and high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, cannot deliver sustainable food and agricultural production. Innovative systems are needed that protect and enhance the natural resource base while increasing productivity.[13] It is critical to identify and promote sustainable agricultural technologies that can close the productivity gap, enhance the resource base and address interlinkages.

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[7] Sarah K. Lowder, Jakob Skoet and Terri Raney, "The number, size, and distribution of farms, smallholder farms, and family farms worldwide", *World Development*, vol. 87 (November 2016).

[8] FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges* (Rome, 2017).

[9] If migrants are able to find successful job opportunities, resultant remittances have the potential to reduce the gendered-productivity gaps, hence empowering female-led farming households, as well as opening up new economic and leadership opportunities for women and youth at the community level (FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture*).

[10] IFAD, *Rural Development Report 2016*.

[11] Deon Filmer and Louise Fox, *Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2014).

[12] Christopher Bren d'Amour and others, "Future urban land expansion and implications for global croplands", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (November 2016).

[13] FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture*.

16. In Asia and Latin America, where the "green revolution" has resulted in widespread adoption of high input-intensive agriculture, a shift towards sustainable agricultural production that enhances the natural resource base is needed. In sub-Saharan Africa, the green revolution has not yet taken place. The region has the opportunity to sustainably increase agricultural production and productivity by using improved technologies and building on integrated approaches. Agroecology, for example, can result in sustained agricultural intensification while enhancing livelihoods and resilience, adapting to climate change and contributing to its mitigation, and preventing the degradation of natural resources.[14]

17. Securing access to diverse and locally adapted crop varieties and livestock breeds through quality genetic material is an important vehicle for improving smallholder productivity, climate resilience and nutrition.

18. Despite significant investment in improving the functioning of formal seed systems, the adoption of improved seed varieties developed by public and private research institutions remains unsatisfactory across much of the developing world. The limited commercial viability of reaching farmers in remote areas who may buy only small amounts of seeds, along with restrictive, costly or ineffective regulatory environments, are among the obstacles to enhancing seed security.[15]

19. Informal seed systems still play a critical role in securing access to seeds.[16] This has led to a rise in State-supported initiatives to promote access at the community level, mainly through locally managed seed banks. Such initiatives safeguard indigenous knowledge and promote the proliferation of diverse genetic resources. Yet ensuring such structures have adequate technical and managerial capacity to ensure farmers' rights to the seeds they develop is a challenge, as is enacting appropriate national legislation to protect farmers' rights, as enshrined in article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

20. The FAO Quality Declared Seed System that was created in 2006 provides a semi-formal type of seed system for the participation of smallholder farmers in the multiplication of improved open pollinated seeds. Vehicles like this have a strong potential to bridge the gap between seed shortages and delivery of improved seed varieties.

21. Considering the challenge of climate change and need for local adaptation, these informal or semi-formal seed systems will need to play a major role in improving resilience and diversifying food production.[17]

C. Increasing vulnerability of food systems

22. Climate change is creating ever more frequent disruptions in agriculture.[18] Low-income and middle-income countries in tropical areas that host the largest number of farmers are especially vulnerable and expected to experience

[14] (Hans P. Binswanger-Mkhize and Sara Savastano, "Agriculture intensification: the status in six African countries", *Food Policy*, vol. 67 (February 2017)).

[15] Indeed, recent efforts by the Government of Tanzania to protect farmers from unscrupulous seed dealers illustrates the challenge many developing countries face: ensuring access to quality seed without penalizing informal or farmer-managed systems.

[16] Shawn McGuire and Louise Sperling, "Seed systems smallholder farmers use", *Food Security*, vol. 8, No. 1 (February 2016).

[17] Emile A. Frison, "From uniformity to diversity: a paradigm shift from industrial agriculture to diversified agroecological systems" (International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems, 2016).

[18] FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture*.

disproportionate declines in productivity.[19] Given the importance of agricultural production for rural growth, under a high-impact climate change scenario poverty is expected to increase by up to 122 million people by 2030.[20] This scenario also points to the likelihood of a fundamental shift in geographical food production patterns, ostensibly increasing reliance on a smaller number of producing countries concentrated in high-potential regions.

23. Invasive pests and emerging diseases are an additional threat to food systems. Crop pests and pathogens are expanding their range as a result of global trade, migration and climate change. Their estimated annual cost of US$ 70 billion is expected to increase unless investments are made in surveillance, prevention, containment and awareness.[21]

24. There is increasing recognition that the traditional foods of indigenous communities can make a strong contribution to addressing hidden hunger or undernutrition. However, the increased migration of youth to urban areas threatens the long-term viability of indigenous food systems and, as reported by FAO, knowledge about thousands of edible and medicinal plants built up over centuries of trial and error could be lost forever, along with the diverse ecosystems that host them.[22]

IV. Trends

25. Investments in research and development for agricultural technologies are widely recognised as a contributor to development (see General Assembly resolution 70/198). At the same time, the geographical distribution of spending on food and agricultural research and development is changing and middle-income countries are now investing more in agricultural research and development than high-income countries.[23] Globally, total private sector investment is comparable to what is invested by the public sector.

26. However, the difference in expenditure ratios between middle-to-high-income countries and low-income countries is widening. Most African countries still fall short of the minimum investment target set by the African Union and the United Nations,[24] while extension systems remain weak and fragmented, with limited technical, functional, institutional and organizational capacities. Reform towards pluralistic, demand-driven and market-oriented extension is needed to provide rural communities with a wide range of skills and knowledge and to facilitate broader interactions among different stakeholders to help them access support and services required for improving their livelihoods.[25]

27. In this context of growing yet uneven financing for agricultural research and development, the following seven trends in agricultural technologies for

[19] FAO, *2016 The State of Food and Agriculture: Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security* (Rome, 2016).

[20] Stephanie Hallegatte and others, *Shock Waves: Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty* (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2016).

[21] Corey Bradshaw and others, "Massive yet grossly underestimated global costs of invasive insects", *Nature Communications*, vol. 7, No. 12986 (October 2016).

[22] FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture*.

[23] Philip G. Pardey and others, "Agricultural R&D is on the move", *Nature*, vol. 537, No. 7620 (September 2016).

[24] Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators, CGIAR, 2016.

[25] FAO, *Tailoring Rural Advisory Services for Family Farms*, policy paper (Rome, FAO and Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services, 2016). Available from www.fao.org/3/a-i5704e.pdf.

development have been identified and are described in detail in paragraphs 30 to 62 below:

(a) Rapid evolution in science and technology innovations;

(b) Biological innovations;

(c) Holistic agricultural development;

(d) Urban food production;

(e) Water-saving and irrigation technology;

(f) Post-harvest and food systems;

(g) Institutional support and information and communications technology (ICT) innovations.

28. Agricultural technologies should holistically address agricultural productivity, post-harvest losses and nutritional security across the food system. They should be affordable, durable and sustainable and easily used and disseminated (see General Assembly resolution 70/198, para.13) and inclusive of women and youth. Taking climate change into account, they should also support adaptation by drawing on farm or livelihood diversification, while remaining mindful of weak social protection, existing gender inequalities and migration.[26]

29. The suite of technologies available to farmers to promote sustainable food production should be as broad as possible, from agroecology to agricultural biotechnologies.[27]

A. Rapid evolution in science and technology innovation

30. New agricultural innovations have rapidly changed technologies and the availability of novel methods and processes. For example, the application of the next generation of genome sequencing linked with high throughput phenotyping and molecular marker-assisted breeding technologies will enable much faster development of new crop varieties that are resistant to intractable biotic stress problems, such as drought, salinity and rust diseases. The development and open access of megadata and information that is analysed, accessed and exchanged through cloud computing, social media, broadband Internet and mobile networks, even in remote areas, will bring profound changes for agricultural research, extension and rural development. Increasing labour scarcity in some developing countries is leading to the rapid mechanization of farming.

B. Biological innovations

31. The potential for biological methods to improve soil quality and reduce damage caused by pests is promising. One study analysed the use and performance of insect biological control agents for the control of insect pests across 148 countries.[28] Analysis of three decades of data revealed that although the number

[26] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security: online consultation on the background document to the CFS Forum", 15 March-6 April 2016.

[27] See, for example, FAO, "Concept note: FAO symposium on the role of agricultural biotechnologies in sustainable food systems and nutrition, February 2016. Available from www.fao.org/3/a-ax916e.pdf, and FAO, "Key messages for agricultural biotechnologies symposium", 2016, available from www.fao.org/3/a-bc613e.pdf.

[28] Matthew J.W. Cock and others, "Trends in the classical biological control of insect pests by insects: an update of the BIOCAT database", *BioControl*, vol. 61, No. 4 (August 2016).

of methods being introduced for testing is falling, a higher proportion of them are successful. In addition, the number of countries implementing biological control methods has markedly increased. The cassava mealybug biological control programme, executed in the 1980s and early 1990s across 24 African countries, introduced an environmentally, economically and socially beneficial approach that had a cost/benefit ratio of 1:242, discounted over 20 years. The use of alternative methods to control pests ranges from integrated pest management to holistic approaches of agroecology.

32. Biofertilizers are gaining importance for use in crop production and restoring the soil's natural fertility. Much of the recent growth in this area stems from the development of effective policy and regulatory frameworks in the developed countries and selected Asian countries that have enhanced the availability and consistency of high-quality products. In sub-Saharan Africa, the adoption of these technologies has proven more challenging. One of the biggest hurdles is the absence of supportive policy and regulatory frameworks, but more investment is also needed for localized research to improve awareness and promote the involvement of the private sector.

33. Growing of legumes before wheat is an example of a viable avenue to add up to 300 kilograms of nitrogen per hectare into the soil. Similarly, integrating leguminous shrubs and trees in Southern Africa has added up to 250 kilograms of nitrogen per hectare into the soil, outcompeting synthetic fertilizer applications while increasing resilience.[29]

34. Integrated cropping systems, such as the widely recognized "push-pull" farming system in East Africa,[30] are successful not only for achieving biological pest control through companion plants but also for significantly improving soil fertility by reducing weed pressure through a permanent soil cover of nitrogen-fixing leguminous crops. The fodder crop *Brachiaria*, used in the push-pull system as a trap crop, is known to restore soil structure and reduce pasture degradation in Brazil.[31] Such a system fits the latest developments in regenerative agriculture, with the aim of restoring and building soil fertility through the use of perennial crops while contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation.[32]

35. Agricultural biotechnologies,[33] ranging from simple applications, such as artificial insemination and tissue culture, through marker-aided selection to genetic engineering and novel genome editing methods, have demonstrated potential to increase agricultural productivity in environmentally friendly ways.[34,35]

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[29] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[30] An ongoing initiative is currently underway to expand the "push-pull" system outside East Africa.

[31] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[32] See also the 4 per 1000 initiative; available at http://4p1000.org/.

[33] Based on the definition of "biotechnology" in article 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as "any technological application that uses biological systems, living organisms, or derivatives thereof, to make or modify products or processes for specific use", FAO considers the term "agricultural biotechnologies" to encompass a broad range of technologies used in food and agriculture for a number of different purposes, such as the genetic improvement of plant varieties and animal populations to increase their yields or efficiency; the characterization and conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture; plant or animal disease diagnosis; and vaccine development.

[34] United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Government Office for Science, "The future of food and farming: challenges and choices for global sustainability — final project report", Foresight project (London, 2011).

[35] John Ruane, James D. Dargie and Catriona Daly, eds., *Proceedings of the FAO International Symposium on the Role of Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition* (Rome, FAO, 2016).

36. Recent developments in advanced genome editing have seen the emergence of a new set of technologies, such as Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR), that make more precise changes to the genetic makeup of a living organism. Such gene-editing technology offers a wide range of new opportunities to accelerate genetic improvement cycles. The science and technology of genome editing is advancing rapidly and is the subject of research in many laboratories, including in developing countries. Such new technology is relatively inexpensive and its rapid expansion should be expected, while at the same time it opens new challenges in terms of regulation, policies and intellectual property rights.

37. The decision to use any agricultural biotechnology must be taken by individual countries and should be informed by a careful evaluation of the benefits and potential risks. The International Symposium on Agricultural Biotechnologies[36] organized by FAO in February 2016[37] is an example of a neutral forum for the exchange of ideas and practices involving States, intergovernmental organizations, research institutions, farmer organizations, academia, civil society and the private sector. The consensus has been reached that biotechnologies and agroecological applications are complementary ways to sustainably address food insecurity and malnutrition. Agricultural biotechnologies can be used in production systems, based on agroecological principles, to enhance productivity while ensuring sustainability, conservation of genetic resources and use of indigenous knowledge.

38. To extend the dialogue on agricultural biotechnologies to the regional level, consultation meetings have been planned by FAO for Asia and the Pacific (Malaysia, 11-13 September 2017), Africa (November 2017), Latin America and the Caribbean (2018) and the Near East (2018). The main goals of these consultations are to identify: (a) elements of a comprehensive regional action plan and road map, including capacity development initiatives, (b) priority themes and partners for South-South cooperation mechanisms and (c) regional research and development themes that address constraints for improved food security and nutrition.

C. Holistic agricultural development

39. In paragraph 14 of its resolution 70/198, the General Assembly called for the augmentation of sustainable agriculture and management practices, such as conservation agriculture.

40. Conservation agriculture builds on the principles of no-tillage, permanent soil cover by residues or cover crops and crop rotation, which can have beneficial impacts at the level of Sustainable Development Goals 13 and 15.[38] Based on the positive impacts observed by rotation, intercropping and relay cropping of legumes with maize, the adoption of good agronomic practices of crop rotation and residue retention should form the basis of subsequent adoption of no-till methods.[39]

41. Regarding soil fertility, data from a 20-year trial by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture shows that the combination of organic inputs with fertilizer resulted in maize yields of 2.8 tons per hectare, compared to 1.7 tons per hectare when only synthetic fertilizer was used. Such integrated soil fertility management

[36] See www.fao.org/about/meetings/agribiotechs-symposium/en/.

[37] With funding support from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands, and the United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service.

[38] See, for example, Kazakhstan case study, in FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[39] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

practices can not only benefit total yields (Sustainable Development Goal 2) and their stability but also improve the soil carbon content (Sustainable Development Goal 13), highlighting its potential for mitigating carbon emissions.[40]

42. In the Indo-Gangetic plains, resource-conserving technologies have increased wheat yields, accompanied with cost savings of 20 per cent. In Asia, farmers have also shifted during the dry season from growing rice to maize-legume intercropping, doubling their profits (Sustainable Development Goal 1) while reducing their synthetic fertilizer usage (Sustainable Development Goal 15) and increasing their yields (Sustainable Development Goal 2).[41] In the Sahel region, Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Dangers (BRACED) projects are building on centuries of local innovations through approaches that combine the physical (improved techniques for soils and agricultural productivity), economic (savings and credit support) and social (community radio with climate focus) dimensions of agriculture.

43. The concept of climate-smart agriculture brings these multidimensional benefits up to scale. In an Indian case study, the adoption of different agricultural technologies, including crop insurance or weather-based crop agro-advisories, was largely context-dependent, influenced by such factors as amounts and variability of rainfall and cash liquidity.[42] Focusing on soil health, a "slash-and-mulch" system[43] in Central America has replaced traditional shifting cultivation, doubling yields (Sustainable Development Goal 2) while building soil nutrient stock (Sustainable Development Goal 15) and allowing for diversification in production (Sustainable Development Goal 1).

44. The importance of the local context is accentuated by the impact of climate-smart agriculture varying across space and time; decisions at the household level will have aggregated effects from the plot to the community and regional levels and are amplified by the diversity of stakeholders involved.[44] FAO identified the undoing of environmentally harmful subsidies and support measures as one common area for strengthening climate mitigation and adaptation; however, even with widespread adoption of climate-smart agriculture, FAO noted that this may fall short of what is needed to meet global climate targets because large adjustments are required in food systems at large.[45] One pathway for such a transformation of agriculture, in line with agroecological principles and embedded within the food system, has been articulated in the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development report for 2009.

45. Currently, the trend is to expand from a climate-smart model to a more holistic approach, such as agroecology, which has a track record of adapting novel technologies with local know-how and solutions.[46] Agroecology takes a food system approach in applying ecological concepts and principles to optimize interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment. Building synergies,

[40] Dries Roobroeck and others, "Integrated soil fertility management : contributions of framework and practices to climate-smart agriculture", Practice Brief, climate smart agriculture (July 2016).

[41] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[42] Arun Khatri-Chhetri and others, "Farmers' prioritization of climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technologies", *Agricultural Systems*, vol. 151 (February 2017).

[43] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[44] An Notenbaert and others, "Targeting, out-scaling and prioritizing climate-smart interventions in agricultural systems: lessons from applying a generic framework to the livestock sector in sub-Saharan Africa", *Agricultural Systems*, vol. 151 (February 2017).

[45] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[46] Altieri et al., 2015, 2017; de Molina et al., 2017; Pimbert, 2015.

agroecology can support food production while restoring the ecosystem services and biodiversity.[47]

46. Following the International Symposium on Agroecology for Food Security and Nutrition (Italy, 2014),[48] FAO organized regional meetings on agroecology in Latin America and the Caribbean (Brazil, 2015), sub-Saharan Africa (Senegal, 2015); Asia and Pacific (Thailand, 2015) and Europe and Central Asia (Hungary, 2016), as well as a national meeting in China in 2016, co-organized with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

47. The New European Consensus on Development: Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future[49] commits to support agroecological practices and actions to reduce post-harvest losses and food waste, as well as to protect soils, conserve water resources, halt, prevent and reverse deforestation, and maintain biodiversity and healthy ecosystems.

D. Urban food production

48. Given the positive transformative potential of strengthened urban-rural linkages in achieving sustainable development and the need to take action to fight hunger and malnutrition among the urban poor, as acknowledged in General Assembly resolution 70/198, as well as the advances made during the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), approaches to strengthening urban and peri-urban agricultural production will contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

49. Urban agriculture has a long history of improving food and income security of urban dwellers. A recent assessment finds that globally, 11 per cent of irrigated cropland and almost 5 per cent of all rain-fed cropland is urban.[50] If urban boundaries are extended by 20 kilometres, these figures jump to 60 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively. Solid data on growth in urban agriculture is lacking, but these numbers, combined with evidence from a large number of national studies across cities in Asia and Africa, suggest that urban and peri-urban agriculture is on the rise. Such cities as Kampala, Kumasi and Phnom Penh are approaching higher degrees of self-sufficiency for some food products.[51]

50. However, urban agriculture may pose environmental and sanitary problems, for example when poor urban dwellers living in high-density areas keep livestock, affecting human health through possible disease transmission and adding to the problem of waste management.

E. Water-saving and irrigation technology

51. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 70/198, the General Assembly underlined the importance of the sustainable use and management of water resources to increase

[47] FAO, Agroecology Knowledge Hub database, available from www.fao.org/agroecology/overview/en/ (accessed 16 July 2017).

[48] With support from France, the Swiss Development Cooperation and the Foreign Office of Agriculture of Switzerland.

[49] See Official Journal of the European Union, vol. 60, 30 June 2017. Available from http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2017:210:FULL&from=EN.

[50] Thebo, A L, P Drechsel, and E F Lambin. 2014. "Global Assessment of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture: Irrigated and Rainfed Croplands." *Environmental Research Letters* 9 (11): 114002.

[51] Francesco Orsini and others, "Urban agriculture in the developing world: a review", *Agronomy for Sustainable Development*, vol. 33, No. 4 (October 2013).

and ensure agricultural productivity, and called for further efforts to develop and strengthen irrigation facilities and water-saving technology.

52. At the household level, access to credit will be critical in order for farmers to invest in micro-drip or solar-powered irrigation equipment. In Nepal, for example, multiple user water irrigation and micro-drip irrigation have a cost/benefit ratio of 1:18 and 1:30, respectively.[52] At the landscape level, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) in Ethiopia not only facilitated the rehabilitation of more than 167,000 hectares of land (Sustainable Development Goal 15) but benefited local irrigation projects, which successfully increased agricultural productivity. When combined with complementary interventions, including a household asset-building programme (Sustainable Development Goal 1), Ethiopian households were found to be more food-secure (Sustainable Development Goal 2), using credit for productive purposes and investing in improved agricultural technologies.[53]

53. Water-saving technologies can also contribute to climate mitigation (Sustainable Development Goal 13), without compromising productivity (Sustainable Development Goal 2). For example, the Alternate Wetting Drying method in rice production[54] has been tested extensively in South-East Asia. It reduces water use by 15 to 25 per cent and methane emissions by 30 to 70 per cent. Similarly, the System of Rice Intensification has doubled yields while reducing irrigation needs and cutting methane emissions. The combination of rice farming with aquaculture in Asia showcases the potential for technology to not only increase income by 400 per cent compared to a rice monoculture (Sustainable Development Goal 1) but also improve family diets (Sustainable Development Goal 2) since a paddy field of 1 hectare can yield as much as 9 tons of rice and 750 kilograms of fish a year.[55]

F. Post-harvest and food systems

54. One avenue for delivering holistic impacts recognised by the General Assembly is to increase the use of agricultural technologies that support more sustainable food systems and have a positive impact on the entire value chain, including technology for post-harvest crop storage, processing, handling and transportation, including in pressing environmental circumstances (see resolution 70/198, para. 14).

55. A food systems perspective has the potential to address multiple Sustainable Development Goals,[56] highlighting the importance of addressing interventions at the level of food systems activities, such as via addressing post-harvest losses as opposed to solely focusing on agricultural production. The United Nations Zero

[52] IDE and others, "Anukalan: driving small farmer investment in climate-smart technologies", available from www.weadapt.org/sites/weadapt.org/files/anukulan-overview.pdf.

[53] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[54] Arnold van Huis and others, *Edible Insects: Future Prospects for Food and Feed Security*, FAO Forestry Paper, vol. 171 (Rome, FAO, 2013).

[55] FAO, "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security".

[56] Food system outcomes (SDG 2) include food availability (target 2.1), food utilization (target 2.2), social welfare and food access (target 2.3) and environmental capital (targets 2.4 and 2.5). Food system activities, such as producing, processing and consumption address targets 2.3 and 2.4. These are connected with the drivers of global environmental change (Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15), including changes in land cover, water availability, biodiversity, and socioeconomic drivers (Sustainable Development Goal 5), including demographic, economic or sociopolitical changes. Additional interactions between these two drivers, such as climate change (Sustainable Development Goal 13), subsequently influences food system activities and outcomes.

Hunger Challenge is one of several initiatives aiming to achieve transformation by breaking down silos using a food systems perspective.

56. As proposed by the International Food Policy Research Institute for achieving target 12.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, developed countries should focus on reducing food waste, whereas developing countries should focus on reducing food loss in the short term and leapfrogging best practices for reducing food waste at a later stage. Post-harvest losses, while low in developed countries, are estimated to range between 10 and 40 per cent for some crops, reaching as high as 50 to 70 per cent in Africa.[57]

57. Recommended and proven technologies to address physical losses include the Purdue Improved Crop Storage Bag, as well as plastic and metal silos. Two large international actors are promoting their adoption: the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center and the Feed the Future programme of the United States Agency for International Development. The benefits of their adoption extend beyond spoilage because farmers are able to delay their harvest sales and earn higher prices.[58]

58. Food systems are increasingly marked by concentration, which may reduce incentives for innovation. At the level of input provisions, three companies currently control 50 per cent of the seed market and five companies share 68 per cent of the agrochemical market. At the level of trade, power has become increasingly concentrated in large-scale retailers, with up to 90 per cent of the global grain trade controlled by just four companies.[59]

59. This concentration raises the question of the role of the public sector, especially to deliver innovations in agricultural food chains.[60] Beyond the need for public research and development and addressing credit constraints by adopters, increased investments are needed in physical infrastructure, particularly for rural roads. Such infrastructure investments, which reduce transaction costs, are also catalysts for increasing the incentives at the farmer level for the adoption of improved agricultural production technologies.[61]

G. Institutional and ICT innovations

60. In paragraphs 7 and 11 of its resolution 70/198, the General Assembly encouraged the growth of agricultural cooperatives through easy access to affordable finance and the development of partnerships to support financial and market services, including training, capacity-building, infrastructure and extension services.

61. Efforts to improve social protection in the context of inclusive rural growth can offer a pathway out of poverty while reducing the overall vulnerability of food systems. Given the link between poverty and agricultural productivity, providing social protection and pursuing agricultural development in an integrated way offers synergies that can increase the effectiveness of both.

62. Trends in extension services have developed around the rise of novel information communication technologies in agriculture that are being successfully deployed in developing countries to overcome barriers to access information and

[57] Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, "Africa agriculture status report 2016: progress towards agricultural transformation in Africa", 2016.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Emile A. Frison, "From uniformity to diversity".
[60] A/RES/70/198.
[61] Jayne et al. 2016.

knowledge. In Uganda, for example, the Grameen Foundation's Community Knowledge Worker programme building on an SMS-based application successfully raised prices of participating farmers by 22 per cent and increased their knowledge by 17 per cent.[62]

V. Policy solutions

63. Member States are currently aligning their national policy environments with the 2030 Agenda. A holistic, integrated and systemic approach to policymaking is required, and is equally as important as the need to create incentives for environmentally sound and innovative technologies. It will be essential to develop informed and inclusive policies within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals that take into account both synergies and trade-offs across the three sustainable development dimensions, as well as across all the Goals.

64. To address the challenges for agriculture and food systems, policymakers must embrace new processes to:

(a) Develop and implement transformational strategies and policies while understanding their systemic implications;

(b) Facilitate an enabling political environment for stakeholders to use technologies that are innovative, integrative and inclusive.

65. In order to ensure that no one is left behind, it is clear that strategies and measures must be developed in an integrated manner that is inclusive of the most vulnerable, particularly for agriculture and food systems.[63]

A. Beyond agricultural production

66. A transformative process towards holistic approaches, such as agroecology and agroforestry approaches that build on indigenous and traditional knowledge, is urgently needed.[64] A fundamentally different model of agriculture is required for more holistic strategies to build long-term fertility, healthy agroecosystems and secure livelihoods.[65]

67. The agriculture sector is inextricably linked with the entire food system. Policymakers are becoming more aware of the need to identify entry points for agricultural technologies that add value throughout the food system to improve the sustainability of storage, transport, trade, processing, transformation, retail, waste reduction and recycling, as well as the interactions among these processes. From a systemic perspective, policies that foster more localized and internalized food systems are essential in order to make more efficient use of resources in food cycles while maintaining standards of income and food production.[66]

68. Interventions to address the impacts of climate change, food losses and waste and sustainable rural-urban linkages, in combination with innovative food and agriculture technologies, can exploit synergies among different policy areas and support the systemic transition towards sustainable food systems.

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[62] FAO, *The State of Food Agriculture*.

[63] Lawrence Haddad and others, "A new global research agenda for food", *Nature*, vol. 540, No. 7631 (November 2016).

[64] FAO, *The Future of Food and Agriculture*.

[65] Emile A. Frison, "From uniformity to diversity".

[66] Ibid.

B. Climate change

69. Such practices as agroecology or organic and regenerative agriculture can buffer climate impacts through the diversification of crops, improving soil conditions, water retention and closed resource cycles (e.g., carbon cycles), thereby also contributing to mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.[67] In addition, diversified and integrated agricultural technologies, such as weather forecasting and insurances that are available and affordable to farmers, have proven to be effective.[68]

70. The Paris Agreement on climate change provides the framework for all countries to set new political standards to hedge against climate impacts and mitigate emissions. Governments will need a systematic approach when developing new agricultural policies, requiring close collaboration among transdisciplinary teams sectorial ministries. In additional, national and mitigation plans require policy coherence: they can only be effective if they are part of broader, transformative policies on agriculture, rural development, food security and nutrition.[69]

C. Food losses and waste

71. Efforts to overcome managerial and technical limitations in harvesting techniques, storage and transportation systems can go a long way towards preventing food losses and waste, and more is needed to address the lack of standardized metrics and food waste data for decision makers.[70] In this context, the Food Loss and Waste Accounting and Reporting Standard enables companies, countries, cities and others to quantify and report on food loss and waste so they can develop targeted reduction strategies and realize the benefits of tackling this inefficiency.[71]

72. Progress is also being achieved through the FAO Save Food Initiative and the community of practice on food loss reduction, which promote good practices in this area, such as new food-drying technologies.

D. Rural-urban linkages

73. Fostering rural-urban linkages plays an increasingly important role in creating sustainable food systems since poorly integrated value chains are missed opportunities for market integration and diversification of activities by young producers and entrepreneurs in rural areas. Improved infrastructure in — and connectivity between — small and mid-size urban centres can bridge gaps in standards of living, facilitate access to markets and reduce food losses. A special session on rural-urban linkages at Habitat III concluded that these linkages also strengthen the inclusivity of agricultural value chains.

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[67] Altieri et al., 2015.

[68] Committee on World Food Security, High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, "Food security and climate change: a report by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition", (Rome, 2012).

[69] FAO, *2016 The State of Food and Agriculture*.

[70] Committee on World Food Security, High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, "Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems: a report by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition" (Rome, 2014).

[71] See http://flwprotocol.org.

E. Actions and initiatives

74. Many Governments have adopted procedures to face these systemic challenges already: the publication *Better Policies for Sustainable Development* issued by the Organisation for Economic and Social Development in 2016 provides an overview of the importance of policy coherence and the different steps countries have undertaken to implement the 2030 Agenda.

75. Efforts are also under way to create an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity (see General Assembly resolution 70/198). A broad range of flagship initiatives, frameworks and platforms are being developed that implicitly or explicitly aim to foster the use of synergies among interlinked systems, such as the Global Land Tool Network (International Fund for Agricultural Development), the Food for the Cities Programme (FAO) and the sustainable food systems programme within the United Nations Environment Programme's 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns.[72]

76. The Changing Course in Global Agriculture Program works with pilot countries in sub-Saharan Africa to foster inclusive, integrated policy-planning processes, with a focus on sustainable food systems, rural poverty reduction and natural resource management.[73] Agroecological food production practices are being promoted thorough the FAO Agroecology Knowledge Hub, while innovative true-cost accounting approaches to internalize externalities are showcased by the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for Agriculture and Food initiative. Furthermore, the Beacons of Hope initiative undertakes a comprehensive review of good practices for sustainable food systems transitions. Also along these lines, the Technology Facilitation Mechanism was established under the 2030 Agenda for the mapping of existing technology facilitation initiatives, including support for policy formulation and the strengthening of technological capabilities and innovation systems.[74]

77. Other proactive initiatives in this context include the Agriculture Transformation Pathways Initiative and the Food, Agriculture, Biodiversity, Land-use, Energy initiative to develop long-term global and national pathways towards sustainable land use and food systems. Also, various United Nations platforms, such as the Committee on World Food Security, address the interlinkages among the Sustainable Development Goals and promote their added value for food security and food systems.

78. Sustained support from international agencies, Governments, the private sector and civil society is needed to improve data and information systems, scale up good practices and spin off dynamic initiatives to gain further momentum. With further support, all these efforts and good practices have the potential to facilitate the transformation needed within the food system to achieve a broad range of the Sustainable Development Goals.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

79. The international community has recognized the necessity for integrated, transformative policymaking by adopting the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. The level of

[72] See www.unep.org/10yfp/programmes/sustainable-food-systems-programme.

[73] See the programme online, available from http://changingcourse-agriculture.com/.

[74] See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/tfm.

transformation, integration and universality required from now on can be achieved only by adopting a holistic approach that delivers impacts across the full range of activities of the food system. On the basis of the analysis provided above, a first set of priority actions are recommended below.

A. Redirection of investment

80. "Business-as-usual" investment patterns will leave 650 million people (8 per cent of the global population) undernourished in 2030.[75] Additional investments of US$ 267 billion a year are needed, of which US$ 181 billion would go to rural areas, US$ 105 billion to stimulate pro-poor growth through agriculture and the remaining US$ 75 billion to social protection programmes.

81. Investments in agriculture should be directed not only to productivity-enhancing technologies but also to relevant food system activities, such as integrated agricultural production, reduced food losses and waste, sustainable processing and retail, access to services and markets, and provision of adequate information for food system stakeholders.

82. Channelling public and private investments from domestic and foreign sources to support small family farms is a powerful stimulus for rural growth. Such farms account for 80 per cent of the food produced in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa and yet remain among the poorest, most vulnerable and food-insecure groups. The Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security adopted by the Committee on Food Security are key guidelines for investors in this context.

83. More investment is also needed for agricultural cooperatives by providing them with easy access to affordable finance, rural infrastructure and irrigation, strengthened marketing mechanisms, access to appropriate risk-management instruments and support for the participation of women and youth in economic activities.

B. Impactful, localized research and development

84. Promising examples from Asia and Europe demonstrate locally appropriate, cost-effective solutions that deliver across the multidimensional targets of Sustainable Development Goals 1-6 and 13-15. Community-managed seed banks, alternative protein sources for feed, integrated cropping systems, water-saving and irrigation techniques, integrated pest management and a continued attention to maintaining diversified habitats constitute practices that have proven their value in terms of yield, ecological and social sustainability. Research and development needs to be redirected to disseminating these practices further. Currently, the share of global public investment that supports research and development on agroecology, for example, is estimated at less than 1 per cent.

85. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and effectively adapt to context-specific climatic changes, investments in research and development, education and extension are required to empower and better serve the needs and demands of family farms in the context of local food systems. Building on the real-world problems of local communities and including their traditional knowledge in

[75] FAO, IFAD and World Food Programme, *Achieving Zero Hunger: The Critical Role of Investments in Social Protection and Agriculture*, 2nd ed. (Rome, FAO, 2015).

the establishment of innovative solutions will increase the sustainability of interventions.

86. Conducting research jointly with effective, pluralistic and demand-driven extension and rural advisory services is critical to ensure that agricultural technologies respond to the demands and needs of family farmers and smallholder producers. Locally adapted, modern machinery is equally important. While ICT holds potential to attract the younger generation, in many instances we lack the data to confirm its impact. Meanwhile, traditional means, such as radio (including community radio) and printed media, still go a long way.

C. Enabling frameworks

1. National and subnational levels

87. National and subnational governments remain the key players in the implementation of sustainable agriculture and food systems, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. They prioritize their objectives and investments in accordance with local needs and contexts. The necessary transformative and integrative reforms depend on the willingness of governments to review their institutional set-ups and overcome sectoral silos. Addressing the factors that impede transitions to diversified agroecological systems must become a higher priority.[76] Authorities depend on adequate, evidence-based tools to support integrative policymaking, and rely on transparent, inclusive decision-making processes that include all stakeholders, specifically the most vulnerable.[77]

88. The creation of incentives for the provision of ecosystem services is a powerful means by which authorities can support the scaling-up of innovative practices described in the present report. Authorities and private actors need to match such incentives with the necessary training of farmers and the other relevant stakeholders in the food system.

89. Other innovative approaches that incentivize producers and consumers can become powerful tools for achieving the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, initiatives that explore the internationalization of externalities in agricultural commodities deserve further research and political support.

90. Vertically integrated food systems provide standardized food for urban areas as well as formal employment opportunities. However, dependence on increasingly concentrated markets and chokepoints along the food supply chain need to be mitigated. The ecological footprint and the social and economic impacts of these lengthening chains need to be addressed and, where necessary, contained. On the other hand, well-organized and properly governed localized food systems have great potential to overcome the current challenges of food systems: they can significantly contribute to mitigating climate change and supporting adaptation, maintaining biodiversity and providing safe, adequate, accessible food and nutrition, including through urban and peri-urban agriculture (Sustainable Development Goals 8, 10 and 11). Stakeholders need to work together to gather data on informal, localized food systems, as recommended by the Committee on Food Security,[78] and to

[76] Emile A. Frison, "From uniformity to diversity".

[77] Paper by the multi-stakeholder Committee in Switzerland providing advice to the national government on issues of agriculture and food systems, see Swiss National FAO Committee, "Working towards Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems", discussion paper, September 2016.

[78] Committee on World Food Security, "Policy recommendations: connecting smallholders to markets", available from www.fao.org/3/a-bq853e.pdf.

establish policies that support such systems in coherence with the flexibility provided in World Trade Organization (WTO) and other multilateral and bilateral trade agreements.

91. The current momentum around rural-urban linkages is relevant in this context, with potential for addressing rural-urban inequalities, access to markets and inclusivity of value chains from a systemic, spatial and territorial perspective. Such an approach can adequately support the trend of urban and peri-urban agricultural production, which is relevant for ecosystem services, and can help reduce urban poverty by addressing food security with a localized perspective.

2. Global level

92. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals also depends on an efficient and effective follow-up and review system in which countries, intergovernmental platforms, United Nations agencies and all stakeholders — including civil society, the private sector and academia — can share lessons and receive timely and adequate feedback and support regarding their progress. The high-level political forum on sustainable development, which organizes the follow-up and review of sustainable development commitments, should mobilize intergovernmental panels and platforms, such as the Committee on Food Security, to support the process of policy coherence, review and lesson-sharing on the Sustainable Development Goals related to agriculture and food systems.

93. Synergies, co-benefits and trade-offs among the Sustainable Development Goals need to be investigated and made apparent in the guidance to Governments provided by United Nations Conventions, intergovernmental platforms and United Nations agencies. Joint task forces should provide expert input and guidance to achieve policy coherence, coordination and integration across the Sustainable Development Goals.

94. Finally, the level of transformation and policy integration required among agricultural policies, environmental policies, social policies and economic policies can be achieved only if the relevant intergovernmental bodies, such as the African Union and the European Union, as well as the Group of 20 and similar entities:

(a) Recognize their ability to support members in the integration of policy frameworks;

(b) Support members in the institutional changes needed to break the silo approach. For example, taking the 2030 Agenda seriously can help to change the narrative around international trade (leaving no one behind) by integrating social and ecological targets with domestic Group of 20 growth and investment strategies. The Group of 20 can further support its members and WTO by addressing concrete synergies and trade-offs between possibly conflicting objectives, such as between a rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system and bilateral and regional investment and trade agreements, taking into account the critical social and environmental targets related to agriculture, food security and nutrition. The Group of 20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Group of 20 Compact with Africa Initiative consequently need to be enacted with a systemic, integrated perspective on agriculture and food systems as a single priority.